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### Thesis

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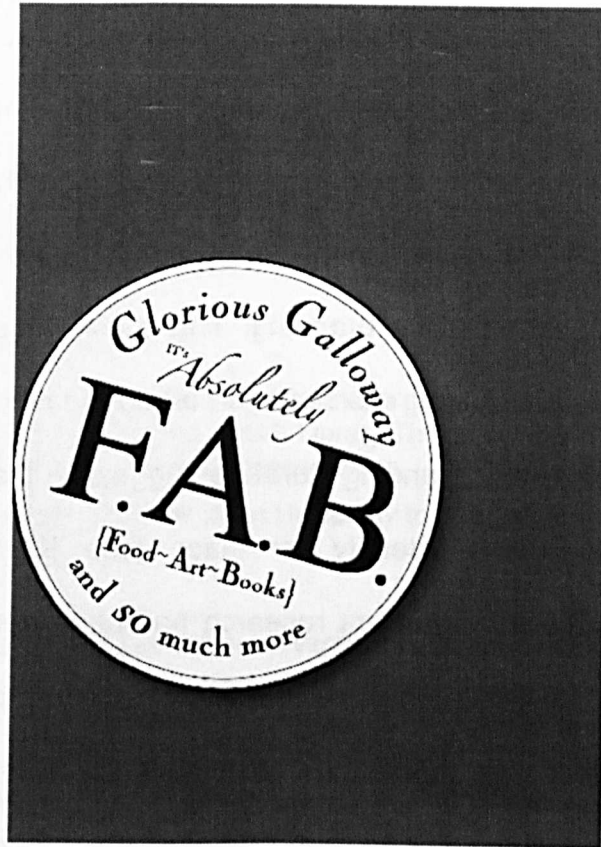
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# Books: A Case Study of The Cultural Politics of Rural Place Branding



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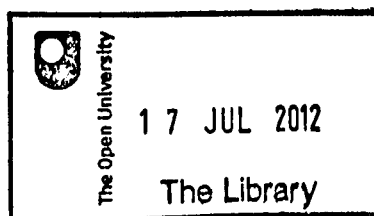
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## Abstract

Using a multi-sited ethnographic case study, this thesis examines the development of *rural* place brands in three towns in Scotland. Engaging with the literatures on place branding and entrepreneurial governance, and the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu, this thesis critically examines how and why the place brands in a rural context were developed; how the places were transformed (reconstructed) through branding; the struggles and contestations within the branding process; and the perceived audiences for such developments. It is argued that whilst there are numerous similarities in the developments of the brands, there are also significant differences to that of urban place branding. This thesis thus problematises the *application* of theories of branding developed in urban areas to rural contexts. It is also argued that, despite the branding literature suggesting that brands promote a clear, coherent and holistic identity for place (see Kavaratzis, 2005), the development of brands in the current research has been deeply contested, and fraught with various struggles over how the brand (and the place more broadly) should be represented. This thesis thus challenges the extent to which a clear, coherent and holistic identity of the brand (and place) can be established. Finally, whilst it has been argued that place marketing and branding strategies seek to target specific audiences (as was also the case in the current research) (see Gotham, 2002), this thesis argues that in practice, this is a deeply problematic process as the audience of place brands is actually rather diverse. In sum, this thesis makes a significant contribution to our knowledge on place branding by providing an in-depth critical examination of place branding processes in a *rural* context, which has been all too often neglected by a dominant focus on the urban.



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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

This research is set within a context of growing interest in the development of place distinctiveness strategies – from the public sector and individual communities. It examines an increasingly popular phenomenon within the development and marketing of rural places – place branding. Despite increasing policy interest in place branding, it has been acknowledged that there is a significant gap within the literature surrounding the branding processes (see Hankinson, 2001) and little empirical focus on real case studies (see Anholt, 2002; Rainisto, 2003). As such, this thesis explores various issues within the branding process, through a multi-sited ethnographic inquiry, situated in three towns in Dumfries and Galloway (South-West Scotland). This introductory chapter aims to set the context for the current research. It will highlight some of the previous research into this field before setting out the questions for the current research. It will briefly outline the theoretical influences before introducing the three places within Dumfries and Galloway that form the case studies for the current inquiry. Finally, the structure of the thesis will be outlined.

### **1.1 Research Context**

It has been widely documented how places in the UK have undergone significant structural economic changes over the past few decades, with an increasing shift away from being places of production (manufacturing and agriculture) to places of consumption (service, tourism and leisure sector) (see Marsden and Murdoch, 1998; Evans, 2001). Associated with such changes, places have also adopted more entrepreneurial strategies of governance (see Harvey, 1989; Hall and Hubbard, 1998), which is a neoliberal approach to place development. Such a governance style emphasises partnership between the private and public sectors

within the development process (see Harvey, 1989). One of the central features of such a governance philosophy is that of 'think global, act local' – ensuring that developments are outward focused (seeking to attract investment and visitors), yet locally delivered and situated. With this emphasis on attracting investment and visitors, places are increasingly in competition with other places for such resources (Harvey, 1989; Hall and Hubbard, 1998).

One strategy of attracting investment and visitors is through the use of culture. Within the post-industrial city, the use of culture within strategies of regeneration and place marketing is clearly evident, and has been widely documented (Evans, 2001; Zukin, 1995; Kearns and Philo, 1993). As Zukin notes, "culture is more and more the business of cities – the basis of their tourist attractions and their unique, competitive edge" (1995:2). However, although much of the focus has been on urban places, it is also clear that increasingly culture is being used within strategies of *rural* regeneration and place development (see Bayliss, 2004). This can also be associated with more entrepreneurial strategies of place governance and development in rural areas (see Little, 2001).

In addition to the use of culture within place development, increasingly, places are adopting brands. It is noteworthy that the brands can also be linked with culture. This current research seeks to explore such intersections and such strategies of place development in rural areas. There are many small, rural places across the UK that have either adopted implicit associations, or more explicit brands around cultural themes, as place marketing strategies with tourism agendas. Arguably, one of the first of these places to adopt an explicit brand was Hay-on-Wye (Wales) in 1961, which adopted the brand 'Book Town' (Seaton, 1996). Book Towns have become a global phenomenon since then (see Seaton, 1999), which has included

the development of Sedbergh Book Town (Cumbria, England) and Wigtown Book Town (Scotland). Such developments can be seen as strategies of place development and marketing, through a brand, using a cultural theme (literature and books).

However, such place marketing strategies are not limited to books. Other places have adopted explicit brands (and/or implicit associations) around food (Castle Douglas, Scotland; Wellington, Somerset; Mold, Flintshire), art (St Ives, Cornwall) and antiques (Petworth, Sussex), to name a few. What interests me is that many of these places are small and rural, yet they are being promoted through such cultural themes (or brands) as part of their visitor offering. Needless to say, place brands such as these are rather new within the cultural and tourist landscape of rural UK.

Kavaratzis (2005) argues that place brands convey a coherent and holistic identity for place, or a 'whole-place narrative', and Arvidsson (2005) argues that brands communicate symbolic associations that give the sense of a shared experience, and a common identity. However, alongside such entrepreneurial strategies of rural place development, we also recognise that rural places and rurality more generally means different things to different people (Marsden *et al.*, 1993). There are multiple ruralities and imaginaries and there are competing demands placed on rural space, such as leisure and agriculture. Indeed, there are also multiple forms of 'leisure', as individuals have different tastes and practices (see Bourdieu, 1984). Therefore, I question the cultural politics of such brand developments in rural areas. As Mitchell claims, cultural politics refers to "contestations over meanings, over borders and boundaries, over the ways we make sense of our worlds, and the ways we live our lives" (2000:159; Jackson, 1989). As also noted

by Marsden *et al.*, “social and cultural tensions arise from the different visions and expectations people have about the same place, reflecting their separate life styles and livelihoods” (1993:14). As such, I question the cultural politics, struggles and contestations within rural place branding.

As I am interested in the contestations and struggles that arise through the branding process, and I am interested in the use of culture within place branding, the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984) provides a useful theoretical reference point and analytic tool through which to explore such issues. These primarily concentrate on his concepts of the field and the struggle for legitimate culture. The theoretical work of Bourdieu will be discussed more fully in chapter three. Very briefly, Bourdieu argues that individuals are disposed to behave in particular ways, because of habitus – a system of objectively internalised dispositions that guide behaviour by providing individuals with a sense of how to behave (see Bourdieu, 1984; Jenkins, 2002). According to Bourdieu, this affects one's tastes and practices. In relation to the development of place brands through culture, it therefore makes me question who the audience of such branding strategies are, and whether the place brands are designed for individuals with particular dispositions and tastes. For example, within the context of the Edinburgh International Festival, Prentice and Andersen found that visitors were “almost exclusively middle class” (2003:17). Quinn (2003) notes a similar finding in relation to the Wexford Festival Opera, which was that local people from a professional background were more likely to attend the opera performances compared to those from other backgrounds. Whilst this makes me question whether individuals from particular social positions and backgrounds are more disposed to particular art forms (and cultural practices) than others, these findings also question whom such

events are aimed at and designed for. Bourdieu's (1984) work regarding cultural tastes and practices will be useful in this regard.

The process of place branding – as an entrepreneurial strategy of place governance – around culture is a complex and contested one, as individuals are likely to have their own ideas about how place should be packaged and promoted. Thus, place development is a conflicted process (see Sidaway, 1998; Goodwin, 1998). Bourdieu's notions of the field and the struggle for legitimacy are useful in exploring such contestations. This is based on the idea that there is a struggle for legitimacy and dominance, over certain interests, values and practices, by different actors. This struggle for legitimacy is a deeply fraught and contested process, as individuals seek to impose their own practices and tastes on others, in a way that they appear to be legitimate and 'better' (see Garnham and Williams, 1980; Jenkins, 2002). In relation to the development of place brands, this thesis argues that Bourdieu provides a useful theoretical framework through which to understand the struggles and contestations that occur within the branding process.

Increasingly, policymakers and individual communities themselves are exploring strategies of place development, through place branding, marketing, and the development of niche tourism products (see Yorkshire Forward, 2009). With growing interest in the phenomenon, this research seeks to add to an increasing body of critical academic literature on the subject, with the potential to influence future policy. Rather than viewing such developments purely from an economic perspective (i.e. the economic benefits), this research seeks a more socio-cultural understanding of their development and the processes that are involved. Through in-depth examination of three rural places that have adopted brands, this research will be able to explore how and why the brands have developed; how places are

reconstructed and transformed through the branding; the contestations and struggles that run through the branding process; and whom the target audiences are for such developments. By understanding such contestations and development processes, policy makers can be better informed about the issues, challenges, and possibilities that surround the development of place brands.

## ***1.2 Research Questions***

Within this research, I seek to address four main research questions. These are centred on the issues and concerns addressed in the above section. The questions are as follows:

### **1. How and why do rural place brands develop?**

At the crux of this research is the intention to examine firstly, how and why such place brands develop in rural areas. It seeks to explore whether the brand developments can be seen as entrepreneurial strategies of place development, and if so, how such strategies actually develop in practice. This will also explore the similarities and differences between brand developments.

### **2. How are places reconstructed through branding?**

With Bourdieu's understanding that society (and tastes, practices) are continually reproduced in ways that appear legitimate (if they gain dominance or legitimacy), this research also seeks to explore the ways in which the place brands have reproduced (reconstructed) place in particular ways. It also seeks to explore the shape that this takes and the various strategies used to establish the brand within the place.



### 3. What are the struggles and contestations in place brand development?

Acknowledging that the development of a place brand is likely to be a contested process (as is the packaging of place more broadly), this research seeks to examine the struggles that take place within the development process. Bourdieu's notions of the field and the struggle for legitimate culture will be critically engaged with in this regard, in order to comprehend such contestations.

### 4. Who are the perceived audiences for place brand developments?

As place marketing is perceived to be targeted towards specific consumers (see Gotham, 2002), this research also asks whom the perceived audiences are for such brands.

## 1.3 Dumfries and Galloway: The Case Studies

The current research seeks to explore these questions, and the process of rural place branding more broadly, through a multi-sited case study in Dumfries and Galloway (Scotland) (figure 1.1). This will focus empirically on a Food Town (Castle Douglas), an Artists' Town (Kirkcudbright) and a Book Town (Wigtown).



Figure 1.1: Above left: Location of Dumfries and Galloway; Above right: Location of the three towns (Google Maps, 2009)

Dumfries and Galloway is a large region (geographically), spanning from Gretna Green, near the Borders in the East to the West coast in South Scotland. It covers some 2,649 square miles, but only has a population of 148,000 (ATP, 2007: 2). Thus, it has a very low population density. Dumfries and Galloway was established as a unitary authority – covering Wigtownshire, Kirkcudbrightshire and Dumfriesshire – in 1975. The region is divided into four administrative areas – Wigtownshire (including Wigtown); Stewartry (including Castle Douglas and Kirkcudbright); Nithsdale; and Eskdale. However, between 1981 and 1991, Wigtownshire's population decreased by 0.4%, compared to the Stewartry's population, which increased by 2.9% (GRO, 1991). The Scottish Government note that “across the whole of Scotland the proportion of older people is growing – and the biggest change will be in Dumfries & Galloway. In Dumfries & Galloway, by 2016 there will be 28 per cent fewer children aged 14 or under, and 38 per cent fewer adults aged 30 to 44” (Scottish Government, 2009: 3).

According to the Dumfries and Galloway Community Plan (2000), the region is “highly rural, one of the most sparsely populated areas in Europe: agriculture and forestry are the dominant land uses” (2000: 6). However, in addition to agriculture and forestry, tourism is a very important industry for the region's economy, employing approximately 11% of the region's workforce either directly or indirectly (ATP, 2007: 2). According to the Area Tourism Partnership, Dumfries and Galloway attracts 1 million visitors each year (970,000 of which come from the UK), contributing £226 million to the region's economy (ATP, 2007: 2). Day visitors also contribute significantly to the region's economy (£56 million) (ATP, 2007: 2). With tourism playing an important role in the region's economy, the Area Tourism

Partnership (ATP) argue that "it is therefore essential that [tourism] activity links with both the regeneration and community planning agendas" (ATP, 2007: 2). In sum, this is emphasising the role of tourism in place development strategies and highlights a broader motivation for developing tourism in the region and Scotland as a whole (see Scottish Executive, 2005). According to the Scottish Executive's (2005) Tourism Framework for Change, the aim is to increase tourism revenue in Scotland by 50% by 2015. The place brand developments explored in this research go some way in achieving these aims.

However, in the year 2000, the Scottish Executive identified regional differences in tourism. The report noted, "it is clear that the less accessible and less well-known areas of Scotland are not enjoying the same benefits from growth in tourism as elsewhere. Spend by tourists in areas outwith Edinburgh and Glasgow has grown by 11% over the last five years. But there has been growth of 24% in the two cities during the same period" (2000: 25). The report then went on to recommend that "greater emphasis will in future be placed on the development and marketing of niche products for rural areas" (2000: 25). In this sense, the development and marketing of niche products in rural areas was seen as the way in which the tourism benefits could be spread to places outwith Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Building on the Scottish Executive's (2000) identification of regional differences in tourism, Dumfries and Galloway is often referred to as having little provenance or profile. As Dumfries and Galloway Council acknowledge, "It is generally recognised that Dumfries and Galloway does not have a strong national profile or a 'must see' tourist attraction... Investing in festivals and events is one policy tool available to the council and its partners to increase the region's profile" (Dumfries

and Galloway Council, 2004a: 9). Thus, within the region there appears to be a drive to raise profile. As one journalist notes:

When it comes to tourism, Galloway has a bit of an image problem. For English visitors driving north, it's so much easier to carry on to the 'real' Scotland, full of tartan, kilts and mountains, rather than turning sharp left at Carlisle and heading off into the wild west. And it's not only the English. Scots aren't that much more adventurous when it comes to exploring the forest parks, rolling pasture-land and rugged coast of this beautiful part of the country. It may be a cliché, but it remains one of the nation's best-kept secrets (Lennox, 2007: 16)

As noted by Alasdair Morgan (Galloway and Upper Nithsdale MSP) in a motion in the Scottish Parliament, "Dumfries and Galloway is advertised by the local tourist board as the 'best-kept secret in Scotland'. That is not, perhaps, the most upbeat or confident slogan for a promotional campaign, but it is an accurate reflection of the reality that sees tourists from south of the border and from abroad drawn, as if magnetically, north to Edinburgh and the Highlands. As if there were a no-left-turn sign on the M74 at Gretna, tourists carry on, ignorant of the existence of the south-west" (Scottish Parliament, 1999: 461).

According to Stevens View (2009) "Other parts of rural Scotland are getting high levels of tourist and day visitor expenditure than is the case in Dumfries and Galloway" (2009: 2). The report continues, "There is widespread acceptance in the industry that more could be done to improve the level of awareness of Dumfries and Galloway and achieve stronger standout as a tourism destination in the marketplace" (2009: 2). With regard to the official statistics regarding tourism, it is clear from figure 1.2 that compared to some areas (notably Glasgow and Edinburgh), Dumfries and Galloway receive a much smaller proportion of visitor

trips (6%) and indeed an even smaller proportion of visitor spend (4%) than other areas of Scotland (VisitScotland, 2006). A similar situation was noted in 1990, by TMS who acknowledged that “tourism in the region is worth £80 million/annum, with expenditure/head being lower than the national average” (1990: 8). However, putting these figures into the broader context, it is clear that Dumfries and Galloway attracts a greater percentage of visits than other places (e.g. Scottish Borders) (ibid)<sup>1</sup>.

**10 UK Tourism by Regions of Scotland**

	<b>Trips*</b> (%)	<b>Nights</b> (%)	<b>Spend</b> (%)
Aberdeen & Grampian	10	11	9
Angus & the City of Dundee	3	3	2
Argyll, the Isles, Loch Lomond, Stirling, and Forth Valley	13	14	12
Ayrshire & Arran	5	5	4
Dumfries & Galloway	6	5	4
Edinburgh & the Lothians	18	14	20
Greater Glasgow & Clyde Valley	18	13	17
Highlands of Scotland	15	20	19
Kingdom of Fife	5	5	4
Perthshire	6	7	5
Scottish Borders	3	2	2
Western Isles, Shetland & Orkney	2	2	2
All Scotland (m)	13.28	47.16	£2,720

\* Trips add to greater than 100%, reflecting visits to multiple destinations

Figure 1.2: UK Tourism to Scottish Regions in 2006 (VisitScotland, 2006)

With regard to the proportion of overseas tourist trips to Dumfries and Galloway, it is rather clear from figure 1.3 that the region only receives 2% of trips, which is one of the lowest (second only to the Western Isles) and is in vast contrast to Edinburgh (51%), Glasgow (32%) and the Highlands (21%). In this sense, Dumfries and Galloway receives fewer international visitors than other regions in Scotland. It is worth highlighting that these figures show visitor numbers for the

<sup>1</sup> It is worth noting for analysis purposes that tourism figures before 2005 are not comparable to figures post 2005, due to changes in the collection of statistics. As such, this has been used to highlight Dumfries and Galloway’s position, compared to other regions in Scotland and is not meant to highlight any changes in visitor numbers over time.



whole region – it does not necessarily distinguish where tourists went within the region. It is much more difficult to ascertain accurate tourist numbers in each place within the region. As such, although these figures show the position of Dumfries and Galloway in terms of tourism in relation to other regions, we are unable to tell where those visitors actually went within the region. Figures from April to October 1996 indicated that the numbers of visits to Tourist Information Centres across Dumfries and Galloway varied greatly (SWRC, 1997). There were 15,274 visits to Newton Stewart (closest to Wigtown); 25,420 to Castle Douglas and 59,190 to Kirkcudbright (SWRC, 1997: 32).

11 Overseas Tourism by Regions of Scotland

	Trips* (%)	Nights (%)	Spend (%)
Aberdeen & Grampian	11	9	9
Angus & the City of Dundee	3	3	3
Argyll, the Isles, Loch Lomond, Stirling, and Forth Valley	12	6	7
Ayrshire & Arran	6	4	4
Dumfries & Galloway	2	1	1
Edinburgh & the Lothians	51	34	35
Greater Glasgow & Clyde Valley	32	23	20
Highlands of Scotland	21	10	12
Kingdom of Fife	5	3	4
Perthshire	5	2	2
Scottish Borders	3	2	1
Western Isles, Shetland & Orkney	1	<1	1
All Scotland (m)	2.73	26.38	£1,439

\* Trips add to greater than 100%, reflecting visits to multiple destinations

Figure 1.3: Overseas Tourism to Scottish Regions in 2006 (VisitScotland, 2006)

### 1.4 Wigtown ‘Book Town’

Wigtown is situated in the Machars peninsula in the west of the region and has a population of approximately 1,000 people (SCROL, 2001). It has a very long history as a settlement and was made a Royal Burgh in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century (see WBBA, 2004). During this time, Wigtown was a very busy port (although to a lesser extent than other places) and, as a result, was a very busy and bustling town (WBBA, 2004). The town had several banks, hotels and shops (WBBA,

2004). It was the County Town of Wigtownshire, so it was also the administrative heart of the county and the seat of the local sheriff's court (WBBA, 2004). The agricultural industry was also important in the town's economy (see Macleod, 2009). All in all, Wigtown was a thriving little town (Drennan, 2008).

However, over time, the port fell into decline, and trains became the important means of transport to and from the town. The train-line was closed in 1950 (see WBBA, 2004), furthering the decline of the town. Following local government reorganisation (in the mid 1970s), Wigtown – once the administrative capital of Wigtownshire – also began to lose purpose and function. Wigtown suffered from administrative restructuring and ceased to be the seat of the county. Juridical duties were transferred to Stranraer (See Galloway Gazette, 6<sup>th</sup> March 1998). Not only did the town lose administrative function, so did its most iconic building – the County Buildings. The County Buildings dominate the townscape of Wigtown and was the home to the County Sheriff's Office and the Court. As these were no longer based in the buildings, they basically lost purpose and began to fall into a tragic state of disrepair. Masonry fell off the building, the roof was leaking (see Murray, 1997) – and there was the suggestion by one councillor to demolish the building (after years of neglect) (see Carter, 2008; Galloway Gazette, 6<sup>th</sup> March 1998).

The agricultural industry also suffered decline. The area had been home to two creameries (Bladnoch and Sorbie) and the Bladnoch Distillery. However, by 1989, the creameries had closed (due to changes in agricultural manufacturing, which opted for fewer, larger creameries), and by 1993 the Bladnoch distillery had closed (see Drennan, 2008). According to WBTWG, these closures resulted in the loss of

220 jobs<sup>2</sup> (1996: 12). Unemployment in the town was high (Macleod, 2009). In 1991, 10.7% of males were unemployed, 16.4% were economically inactive and 3.1% were on government schemes. A total of 6.1% of females were unemployed and 39.9% were economically inactive (GRO, 1991). According to DGC (1996: 15), between 1981 and 1991, total employment fell by 17%. The report claims that “the average unemployment rates in Wigtown, during 1994 were significantly higher than the Scottish average (9.3%)” (1996: 15). This led to Wigtown having one of the highest rates of unemployment in Scotland during the early 1990s. Buildings became derelict and decaying and the property market was stagnant – with approximately 45 buildings on the market in 1996 (Macleod, 2009).

Between 1993 and 2005, there was also a 33.76% reduction in the number of 22-34 year olds in the Wigtown district whilst the number of 75-84 year olds increased by 25.35% and number of 85 year olds (plus) increased by 38.54% (DGC, 1996: 9). The town thus has an older age profile than the rest of Scotland, with 27.64% of inhabitants being of pensionable age and over (compared to 18.61% in the whole of Scotland). Equally, the town has fewer people of working age (16 – pensionable age), with only 54.10% falling into this category, compared to 62.19% in the whole of Scotland (SCROL, 2001). With regard to employment, agriculture is still a large employer (7.95% compared to 2.2% nationally), as are manufacturing (13.85% compared to 13.65% nationally), construction (14.10% compared to 7.76% nationally) and wholesale, retail and repairs (21.54% compared to 13.3% nationally). In terms of education, a significant proportion of the town's residents have no qualifications (49.86% compared to 33.23% nationally) (SCROL, 2001).

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<sup>2</sup> Out of a town with a population of 1,000 people, this figure is quite significant.



Since 1997, Wigtown has been branded as Scotland's Book Town. It has approximately 20 bookshops and hosts a number of book related events and festivals, which have numerous sponsors, including organisations that actively encourage the promotion of reading. The development of Wigtown Book Town will be explored in the forthcoming chapters.

### **1.5 Kirkcudbright 'Artists' Town'**

Kirkcudbright has a population of 3,360 (GRO, 2003). It became a Royal Burgh in 1455 and is the capital of the Stewartry (Gordon, 2008). One aspect of Kirkcudbright's long history is its artistic heritage. From the 1880s to the 1980s, Kirkcudbright was a bustling artists' colony (see Bourne, 2000; Gordon, 2006). According to Gordon (2006), during this period, around 150 artists were connected with Kirkcudbright. The town has long associations with the Faed brothers, who were artists from neighbouring Gatehouse-of-Fleet and with E.A. Hornel who was associated with the Glasgow Boys<sup>3</sup> (See Gordon, 2008). E.A. Hornel moved to the town (where his parents originated from) from Australia when he was only two years of age, and lived in the town for most of his life. He spent time at both Edinburgh and Glasgow Schools of Art – making many contacts in the art world. Many artists, particularly from Glasgow, such as George Henry and James Guthrie, came and spent summers in Kirkcudbright – painting the surrounds (see Devereux, 2005). As Billcliffe records, it became “standard practice among Glasgow painters of leaving the city for several months in the summer to fill sketch books and small canvasses to work up in the winter into exhibition pictures for the Institute and the Academies” (1985: 19). As Hudson notes “suddenly, it was

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<sup>3</sup> The Glasgow Boys were a group of young painters in Glasgow in the 1880s, who challenged the art establishment, by producing modern paintings outside of established art clubs – which they were denied membership from (see Billcliffe, 2010)

fashionable for artists to live and work in a rural location and be among their friends far from the madding crowd” (2005: 6). In addition to visiting Kirkcudbright, many of these artists also visited other rural places, including Moniaive in Dumfries and Galloway. As noted by Lord Macfarlane of Bearsden – an individual who is rather influential in the art world – “I have long been aware of the importance of Kirkcudbright in the history of Scottish painting in general and of the Glasgow School in particular. The links between Glasgow and Kirkcudbright were especially strong in the 1880s and 1890s and some of the Glasgow Boys’ best loved works were painted in Kirkcudbright” (In Bourne, 2000: 9).

This group of artists – known as the Glasgow Boys – were rather anti-establishment (see Billcliffe, 2010). Rather than choose art forms that were accepted by the art academies, they chose to pursue different avenues – avoiding the dominant standards (Bourne, 2000). During the 1930s and 1940s, their work fell out of fashion. However, “with the general revival of the arts of the nineteenth century during the 1960s came a specific interest in the boys” (Billcliffe, 1985: 8). During his life, Hornel became wealthy and invested in a lot of property within Kirkcudbright. He became the second biggest landowner in the town. His “success allowed him to assume the role of ‘gentleman-artist’, travelling around the world and enjoying his position as father-figure in the colony of artists who established themselves at Kirkcudbright after the turn of the century” (Billcliffe, 1985: 234). In 1901, Hornel bought one of the grand properties on the High Street – Broughton House – where he not only had an art studio and gallery, but also a generous library of books (Gordon, 2008). Today, Broughton House is managed by the National Trust for Scotland and is actively promoted as the house of Hornel, the artist (NTS, 2010).

It is worth noting that it was not only the Glasgow Boys who were attracted to Kirkcudbright. Just after the outbreak of the First World War, Jessie M. King (internationally reputed book illustrator) and her husband E.A. Taylor moved from Paris – where they ran an art school – to Kirkcudbright, and ran summer art schools. They purchased Greengate on the High Street in the town and converted the buildings along the close behind Greengate into artists' studios and residences. Indeed, as Gordon notes, "an influential tutor at Edinburgh College of Art used to tell his students that their education would be complete only after a period with the Taylors in Kirkcudbright" (Gordon, 2008: 196). This became the hub for many female artists, such as Dorothy Nesbitt. Many other professionally trained artists were attracted to Kirkcudbright, such as Charles Oppenheimer (see Gordon, 2006). Gordon claims that it was this migration of artists to Kirkcudbright that made the town "St Ives of Scotland" (2008: 195). As Hudson notes "Artists' Towns became centres for theorising and experimenting... They were loosely knit, bohemian universities for the creative spirit, a chance to indulge social and personal trial and error. The artist could find mutual support among like-minded people while food and accommodation were cheap and subjects to paint were plentiful" (2005: 5-6).

But, as noted by Gordon (2006), the term artists' colony is rather misleading. He comments, "The term suggests that they dominated. They did not. They took their place alongside the plumbers and the joiners and the shopkeepers, got on with their own jobs and, in most cases, fully participated in the everyday life of the community" (2006: 3). Many of the artists throughout this period actively contributed to Kirkcudbright society – organising pageants, sitting on the town council and as justice of the peace (see Gordon, 2008). It was many of these artists who painted the houses in the variety of colours that one can see around

the town today. However, the artists' colony was perceived to have died in the 1980s – following the death of Anna Hotchkis in 1984 (Devereux, 2005). A century of art history had come to an end. As Devereux acknowledges, “since this time, Kirkcudbright has not been the focus for art and craft activity that it once was, although the town continues to attract tourists, some of whom have become residents” (2005: 33).

It must be acknowledged that Kirkcudbright's artistic heritage has long been promoted. Sommerville in 1973 published a book entitled *A Stroll Around Kirkcudbright*, which discussed the artists' heritage and the fact that Kirkcudbright had been a popular destination for visiting artists. Many of the artists visited the town by train, which opened in 1863, although the train station and line was closed in 1965 (DGS, 5<sup>th</sup> May 1965). The trains, however, provided a means of transporting both artists and their work from the rural peripheries back to the city (Hudson, 2005; Devereux, 2005).

The association between Kirkcudbright and artists has also been documented in numerous other sources – including art history accounts related to the Glasgow Boys – and also in non-fiction accounts. Crime-writer, Dorothy L. Sayers, set her novel 'Five Red Herrings' (first published in 1931) in Kirkcudbright, which involved a murder amongst one of the artists' community in the town. She gained her inspiration for the book from staying in the town and associating herself with many of the artists' community. In her opening to the book, Sayers begins:

If one lives in Galloway, one either fishes or paints. 'Either' is perhaps misleading, for most of the painters are fishers also in their spare time. To be neither of these things is considered odd and almost eccentric. Fish is the standard topic of conversation in the pub and the post-office, in the

garage and the street, with every sort of person, from the man who arrives for the season with three Hardy rods and a Rolls-Royce, to the man who leads a curious, contemplative life, watching the salmon-nets on the Dee... The artistic centre of Galloway is Kirkcudbright, where the painters form a scattered constellation, whose nucleus is in the High Street, and whose outer stars twinkle in remote hillside cottages, radiating brightness as far as Gatehouse-of Fleet. There are large and stately studios, panelled and high, in strong stone houses filled with gleaming brass and polished oak. There are workaday studios – summer perching places rather than settled homes – where as good north light and a litter of brushes and canvas form the whole of the artistic stock-in-trade. There are little homely studios, gay with blue and red and yellow curtains and odd scraps of pottery, tucked away down narrow closes and adorned with gardens, where old-fashioned flowers riot in the rich and friendly soil. There are studios that are simply and solely barns, made beautiful by ample proportions and high-pitched rafters, and habitable by the addition of a tortoise stove and a gas-ring. There are artists who have large families and keep domestics in cap and apron; artists who engage rooms and are taken care of by landladies; artists who live in couples or alone, with a woman who comes in to clean; artists who live hermit-like and do their own charring. There are painters in oils, painters in watercolours, painters in pastel, etchers and illustrators, workers in metal; artists of every variety, having this one thing in common – that they take their work seriously and have no time for amateurs (Sayers, 2003 [1931]: 1-2)

Of course, the town is not only about artists. Fishing and agriculture are still important, although have somewhat diminished over the past few years (see Gordon, 2008; Macleod, 2009). Despite this, Kirkcudbright remains as one of the largest exporters of scallops in Scotland (see Curtis and Devereux, 2008). However, during the late 1990s, the town was, like many other rural towns, facing economic challenges. Businesses were suffering, shop premises were becoming vacant, and there was a relatively high-level of out-migration (Gordon, 2008). Kirkcudbright's age profile is also rather older than the average (SCROL, 2001).

According to SCROL (2001), 15.17% of the Kirkcudbright population are under 16 (19.20% nationally); 55.24% are aged between 16 and pensionable age (62.19% nationally) and 29.59% aged over pensionable age (18.61% nationally). Of those aged between 16 and 74 and in employment (1,403), 3.42% work in agriculture and forestry (2.20% nationally); 2.21% work in fishing (0.31% nationally); 14.75% work in wholesale and retail (13.30% nationally) and 7.56% work in hotels and restaurants (4.95% nationally) (SCROL, 2001). Of those aged between 16 and 74 (2,492), 39.13% have no qualification (33.23% nationally); 24.56% have level 1 (24.69% nationally); 13.16% have level 2 (15.65% nationally); 4.65% have level 3 (6.95% nationally) and 18.50% have level 4 (19.47% nationally) (SCROL, 2001). Since the year 2000, Kirkcudbright has been branded the Artists' Town. The town has a variety of art galleries, studios and picture framers and hosts numerous events and exhibitions throughout the year. The development of Kirkcudbright Artists' Town will be explored further in forthcoming chapters.

### ***1.6 Castle Douglas 'Food Town'***

Castle Douglas has a population of 3,740 (GRO, 2003). It was built in the late 1790s by William Douglas (see Gordon, 2008). It was a completely new town, built out of a smaller settlement. The town has always been a very busy and thriving commercial hub within the Stewartry and within Galloway more broadly, very much connected to agriculture. According to a Stewartry tourist guide from 1949, Castle Douglas was referred to as the "commercial capital of the Stewartry" (1949: 18) and that Castle Douglas "has for many years been one of the most important market towns in the South of Scotland" (1949: 19). As noted by Gordon (2008):

Though Kirkcudbright is the Stewartry's capital de jure, modern Castle Douglas can fairly claim the status de facto. While off-the-beaten-track

Kirkcudbright retains its importance as a legal and administrative centre, Castle Douglas, with its pivotal position on the road network is the county's market town and commercial hub. This role steadily evolved throughout the nineteenth century (Gordon, 2008: 31)

This not only illustrates Castle Douglas' economic position, but also Castle Douglas' relation with other towns, namely, Kirkcudbright. As Gordon continues, "just as Glasgow is the commercial capital of Scotland, so the bigger and better placed Castle Douglas has the leading role within the Stewartry. It is characteristic of their difference that, when the Stewartry still had a railway system, Castle Douglas was on the main line, while out-of-the-way Kirkcudbright sat picturesquely at the end of a charming branch-line" (Gordon, 2008: 84).

But Castle Douglas' position and economic status is not only a reflection on the town's past, but also its present. The town still acts as the centre for much agricultural-commercial activity, including being home to a long-established livestock auction market (Macleod, 2009). In addition to this, there are a number of long-established independent retailers in the town – many of whom have been in the town for several decades and in some cases, a number of generations (see Gordon, 2008). The town has several butcher shops; an award winning independent brewer; many cafes; wholefood shop etc. The town has proportionately more independent businesses than national chain stores. Castle Douglas is therefore different to many towns in the rest of Scotland, and the UK more broadly, which are commonly being referred to as 'Clone Towns'. Castle Douglas most certainly cannot be perceived as such. It has always been perceived as a thriving market town. As Gibson noted in 1976, "nowadays the high street of one town is often a replica of a score of others due to the proliferation of multiple stores, chain stores and national businesses. King Street is a fortunate

exception... This gives a happy individuality” (Gibson, 1976: 7). Despite having numerous food-related businesses, Castle Douglas also has (and has had) a wide variety of other businesses too:

Here are grocers and butchers, fishmongers, greengrocers and confectioners. Visit a bakers shop and, if a back door is open, there may be a glimpse of the bakery behind – no factory-made bread and cakes in this establishment. Other shops sell shoes, clothing, household linen, wool, china, paint, carpets, furniture, antiques, electrical goods, sports equipment, ironmongers, chemists, jewellers, booksellers and stationers all have premises. Here one may have one's hair trimmed or a tooth filled, have a photograph taken, place a bet, or inquire about a mortgage from a building society, have clothes dry-cleaned or a picture framed. There are banks, legal firms, chartered surveyors, the showrooms of the Gas and Electric Boards, the Post Office and the office of the local newspaper, 'the Galloway News'" (Gibson, 1976: 7)

If one walks along the main shopping street in Castle Douglas today, in 2011, there are not too many changes from the description that Gibson gave in 1976. One butchers has been trading since 1897, one is now managed by the third generation of the same family and one was set up in 1924. All are well and truly established within Castle Douglas. As Gibson acknowledged "it is known that some customers come from outwith the Stewartry to shop for butcher meat in Castle Douglas" (1976: 11). Similarly to Kirkcudbright, Castle Douglas lost its train line and station in 1965 (DGS, 5<sup>th</sup> May 1965).

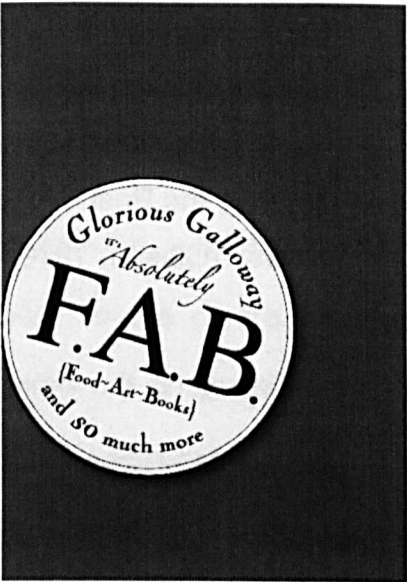
According to SCROL (2001), 17.71% of the Castle Douglas population are under 16 (compared to 19.20% nationally); 56.01% aged between 16 and pensionable age (62.19% nationally) and 26.29% pensionable age and over (18.61% nationally). 3.51% of those in employment (1,508) work in agriculture and forestry



(2.20% nationally); 19.83% work in wholesale and retail (13.30% nationally) and 7.16% work in hotels and restaurants (4.95% nationally) (SCROL, 2001). Of all people aged 16 to 74 (2,655), 40.11% have no qualifications (33.23% nationally); 25.69% have level 1 (24.69% nationally); 13.75% have level 2 (15.65% nationally); 4.63% have level 3 (6.95% nationally) and 15.82% have level 4 (19.47% nationally) (SCROL, 2001). Castle Douglas was branded Food Town in 2002. This will be explored further in the forthcoming chapters.

**1.7 Glorious Galloway: F.A.B**

In addition to each of the places identified having their own place brand, collaboratively, the three places are branded through the Glorious Galloway consortium as F.A.B [Food, Art, Books]. This is a regional marketing campaign promoting the three towns together as a cultural package offering around food, art and books (see figure 1.4).



*Figure 1.4: The F.A.B Promotional Brochure*

I have chosen these three places, as they are towns of a similar size, they are all located in the same region, they are each explicitly adopting a place brand and collaboratively, they are being promoted through the F.A.B campaign. Whilst the predominant empirical focus of this thesis is on the three towns mentioned, I argue that my forthcoming analysis has wider theoretical applicability, regarding the use of culture and branding in rural place development. The following chapters will explore the cases in detail, in relation to previous research and will address the research questions identified above.

## **1.8 Thesis Structure**

Chapter two of this thesis will explore previous literature on entrepreneurial governance, culture-led regeneration and place branding. By critically examining previous research, it sets the context for the current inquiry. This leads onto chapter three, which is another literature review, based on the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu and literature on lifestyles and tastes. From here, chapter four discusses the methodology used within this research. Chapter five is the first of four empirical chapters, and seeks to address the first research question about how and why the place brands developed. This chapter critically engages with the notion of entrepreneurial governance, as seen in practice in the three case studies. Chapter six then addresses the second research question, and examines how the places have been reconstructed and transformed around the place brands. Chapter seven addresses the third research question, which explores the struggles and contestations within the branding process. This chapter critically engages with the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu in understanding such processes. The last empirical chapter (chapter eight) addresses the fourth research question, by examining who the perceived audiences are for such place brand developments. Finally, chapter nine is a discussion and conclusion for this current research, which also opens avenues for future research.

## **1.9 Chapter Summary**

As discussed, this research examines an increasingly popular phenomenon within the development and marketing of rural places – place branding. The following chapters explore various issues within the branding process, through a multi-sited ethnographic inquiry, situated in three towns in Dumfries and Galloway (South-West Scotland). This introductory chapter briefly set the context for the current

research. It highlighted some of the previous research into this field and set out the questions for the current study. It introduced the theoretical influences before outlining the three places explored as case studies (Wigtown, Kirkcudbright, Castle Douglas). Through this research, discussed in the following chapters, four main research questions will be addressed. These are:

1. How and why do rural place brands develop?
2. How are places reconstructed through branding?
3. What are the struggles and contestations in place brand development?
4. Who are the perceived audiences for place brand developments?

Thus, this research will critically explore how and why the place brands were developed; who the audiences are for such branding initiatives; the struggles and contestations that emerge through the branding process; and the extent to which the branding process reconstructs place in particular ways. As discussed, the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu will be drawn upon to critically analyse such issues within the empirical case studies, with the anticipation of making theoretical inferences from the cases, that can be used to better inform policy-makers and communities interested in establishing place brands. Before such analysis takes place, the next chapter will begin with a review of the literature surrounding entrepreneurial governance, culture-led development and place branding.

## **Chapter Two: Place Branding and Entrepreneurial Governance**

Over the past few decades, many cities in the UK have experienced significant economic restructuring, including deindustrialisation and an increasing emphasis on the service sector and leisure and tourism economies (see Kavaratzis, 2005; Harvey, 1989). This shift can also be associated with an increasingly important consumer culture (see Lury, 1996). As such, many cities are now in a post-industrial era and are often in competition with other places, in order to attract private sector investment and visitors (Harvey, 1989; Kavaratzis, 2005). Thus, there is significant emphasis on inter-urban competition (Wood, 1998). With this element of competition, places which are not competitive, or which are not seen to be attractive, face the potential of decline (Wahab and Cooper, 2001). Within such a competitive environment, this has led to the emergence of more 'entrepreneurial' styles of local economic development by city authorities since the 1970s and 1980s (see Harvey, 1989). This is where the public sector fosters a much more entrepreneurial culture, with an outward oriented stance to local economic development (see Williams, 2006). This is often delivered through partnership between the public and private sectors (Hubbard and Hall, 1998). Thus, through partnership, previously productive places are transformed in entrepreneurial ways into spectacular cities of consumption, in order to compete against other places and attract investment (Harvey, 1989; Hubbard and Hall, 1998; Ward, 2003).

This often involves the re-imaging of such places (Hubbard and Hall, 1998; Hannigan, 2003: 353), alongside place marketing strategies, and increasingly, place branding (see Kavaratzis, 2005). In this sense, places are promoted and marketed in ways that promote their appeal and advantages (Ward, 1998a; 1998b; Gold and Ward, 1994; Kearns and Philo, 1993; Harvey, 1989; Hubbard and Hall, 1998). This can be achieved through advertising and promotion; physical

redevelopment; the creation of mega events and spectacles; and through cultural regeneration and consumer attractions (see Hubbard and Hall, 1998; Wood, 1998). In essence, places and their images are packaged, as products and commodities, which can be sold. This not only portrays entrepreneurial power, but also processes of consumption – selling the city as a place to be consumed (see Hetherington and Cronin, 2008).

However, we must note that this entrepreneurial style of governance is not exclusively urban. It is also evident in rural contexts (Goodwin, 1998; Marsden and Murdoch, 1998), as rural areas are also increasingly in competition with other places for investment and visitors. As Little notes “the shift towards a governance culture has been associated with the promotion of more entrepreneurial approaches in rural development” (2001:100). This shift can be associated with processes of rural restructuring (Little, 2001; Marsden, 1998), similar to that experienced by the urban. As widely noted, rural areas in the UK have undergone significant changes and restructuring in recent times (Little, 2001; Marsden, 1998; Marsden and Murdoch, 1998; Murdoch *et al.*, 2003; Woods, 1998; Atterton, 2001). We have witnessed a diminishing agricultural industry (one hit by numerous crises, including BSE and Foot and Mouth Disease) and an increasing service sector economy, including leisure and tourism (Murdoch *et al.*, 2003). Despite acknowledgement of the economic changes and the increasingly entrepreneurial strategies of governance in rural areas, it is the intention of this thesis to examine such entrepreneurial strategies in rural development, and explore the similarities and differences with the urban model (see Hubbard and Hall, 1998). This thesis thus asks how and why entrepreneurial strategies of place development are implemented in rural contexts, through specific focus on three case studies, which

allow a critical and in-depth analysis to take place, and which will contribute to our understanding of entrepreneurial place development in rural areas.

## **2.1 Cultural Regeneration and Festivals**

It has been widely documented how culture and cultural attractions (including festivals, museums etc) are increasingly used within entrepreneurial approaches to place regeneration (Zukin, 1995; Bayliss, 2004; Quinn, 2005; Bassett, 1993). Instead of being places of Fordist production (e.g. heavy industry), cities have become sites of the production and consumption of culture (Quinn, 2005; Evans, 2001; Power and Scott, 2004; Scott, 2000). This can often be to the exclusion or marginalisation of other forms of economic activity. As a result, cities and urban areas, assisted through events, festivals and other cultural attractions have become culturally vibrant (Prentice and Andersen, 2003):

Culture is central to promoting the continued renaissance of the city and has a role to play in creating a more inclusive and sustainable community. Culture creates jobs, attracts investment and enriches the lives of people who live and work in and visit the city. Culture brings distinction to the image and profile of the city; it enriches the experience of the city centre and makes each community unique in its history or sense of place. Culture is an essential creative force in the new knowledge-based economy and helps to build skills and confidence in people (Yeoman *et al.*, 2004:6)

It is argued that culture has numerous benefits (e.g. Matarasso, 1998; Brown *et al.*, 2000). In addition to social benefits, there are also associated economic benefits (Bayliss, 2004). It can be used within the regeneration of the built environment (e.g. 'cultural quarters') and within strategies that promote place – improve place image and attract tourists and investment (Bayliss, 2004; Ward, 1998b; Hajer, 1993; Lewis, 1990; Philo and Kearns, 1993). Thus, it has been

argued that culture affects the economic, social and physical regeneration of cities (see Evans, 2003). This is in recognition of the growing importance of the cultural, leisure and entertainment industries within the contemporary economy (Kavaratzis, 2005: 333). Glasgow has long been used as an example of where culture has re-stimulated the economy of the city and also improved the identity of place (see Di Domenico, 2001). Thus, it has been acknowledged that culture is often used within the re-positioning of place (O'Connor, 1998); within place development (Bayliss, 2004) and in rebranding and reconstructing place image and identity (Hetherington and Cronin, 2008). Therefore, increasingly place is transformed, re-presented, packaged and consumed through culture and cultural industries, in order to attract tourists and investment (Urry, 1995). As such, places are actively being promoted as 'cultural centres' through the use of culture, arts and festivals (Gold and Gold, 1995). A clear example would be Edinburgh, which promotes itself as a 'festival city' (Prentice and Andersen, 2003).

According to Waterman (1998), arts festivals transform everyday space into something else. He claims that arts festivals develop strong associations with places, which may assist in defining that place. Through such a process, festivals are then local, with a global facet – seeking to attract audiences and participants from elsewhere (see Zukin, 1991). Indeed, as Waterman argues "arts festivals have as much to do with place as with art, and this concerns not just where they are held but why, and it refers to how they contribute to and assimilate from the characters of the places. In many ways, promoting an arts festival is keenly related to promoting the place" (1998: 60). This quote not only encourages us to explore the reasoning behind festivals (or exhibitions) – how they stem from the places where they are situated – but also how they can construct the representation of place in a particular way. It also clearly highlights an entrepreneurial agenda of

festivals, linked with the promotion of place and attracting visitors (see also Quinn, 2006; Getz, 1989; 1991):

The cultural facets of festivals cannot be divorced from the commercial interests of tourism, regional and local economy and place promotion. Selling the place to the wider world or selling the festival as an inseparable part of the place rapidly becomes a significant facet of most festivals. If the selling is successful, then the festival becomes an important image-maker in its own right. This highlights the latent tensions between festival as art and festival as economics, which are perhaps the most prominent issue of all in the organisation of contemporary large-scale arts festivals (Waterman, 1998: 60-61)

Similarly, Zukin notes, "culture is more and more the business of cities – the basis of their tourist attractions and their unique, competitive edge" (1995:2; Harvey, 2001). This is associated with the symbolic economy, which uses images and representations to promote the city as a product for consumption (Zukin, 1995; Hetherington and Cronin, 2008).

However, we should acknowledge that the use of culture within these strategies is not exclusively urban – but happens in rural areas too (Bayliss, 2004; Storey, 2004; Burnett, 1998<sup>4</sup>). Thus, trends of cultural production and consumption associated with urban areas are increasingly being 'mirrored' in predominantly rural areas (see Gibson 2002<sup>5</sup>). Not only are many rural local authorities placing increasing emphasis on culture (see Bayliss, 2004), but also EU funding directives (such as Leader) are emphasising culture and heritage within place development and tourism strategies (Storey, 2004; Europa, 2008). It is noteworthy that Leader

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<sup>4</sup> See Burnett (1998) for the role of culture in development in the Scottish Highlands and Islands

<sup>5</sup> See Gibson (2002) for the role of popular music in New South Wales, Australia.



was established in 1991 and was targeted towards rural areas considered to need economic development (see Shortall, 2008). This clearly links the economic agenda with the cultural. Such a phenomenon can be seen in the places explored in this research, which have developed cultural themes around food, art and books.

Interestingly, based on research into the role of culture in economic and social development in Ireland, Bayliss (2004) argues that rural local authorities tend to place greater importance on the role of culture in development than urban authorities. However, according to Bayliss (2004), urban areas rated the use of culture in place promotion strategies more highly than rural areas (in terms of promotion for inward investment and skilled personnel), although more rural authorities rated the use of culture as a place marketing strategy for tourists as important/very important than urban areas. Despite all rural authorities noting the importance of culture in terms of the construction of local image and identity, Bayliss (2004: 825) found that place promotion was not seen to be the main objective of culture, and that greater emphasis was placed on social rather than economic development. However, as Bayliss' research was based on a survey of Irish local authorities, one must be critical of who actually completed the survey – as within local authorities, different departments will have different remits. It is quite possible that the economic development service of the local authority may view the role of culture rather differently to a cultural services department.

What this latter finding from Bayliss (2004) does is highlight that there are different agendas and motivations with regard to using culture in development. As Waterman (1998: 64) notes in relation to arts festivals, there are several 'overlapping objectives', which are not always harmonious and where tensions

occur (e.g. between economic objectives and cultural objectives). These include a desire to promote place and attract tourists; to attract business investment; to create jobs; and to improve places for its residents (Waterman, 1998). Thus, the use of culture in development can be a contested process. With recognition of such potential contestation, this research seeks to examine the struggles and contestations associated with the use of culture in rural place development.

Furthering the contested nature of culture, it is important to ask who such 'culture' is aimed at – as such strategies may result in exclusion. Within the context of the Edinburgh International Festival, Prentice and Andersen found that visitors were “almost exclusively middle class” (2003:17). Quinn (2003) notes a similar finding in relation to the Wexford Festival Opera, which was that local people from a professional background were more likely to attend the opera performances compared to those from other backgrounds. This makes me question whether individuals from particular social positions and backgrounds are more disposed to particular art forms than others – but this finding also asks whom such events are for. With recognition that aspects of culture could potentially be more appealing to particular audiences than others, it is therefore important to examine whom the perceived audiences are within place development strategies around culture, such as food, art and books, as such strategies, whilst including some, may exclude others.

As Quinn (2003; 2005; 2006) notes in relation to both the Galway Arts Festival and Wexford Festival Opera, as these festivals developed as tourist attractions, they became more professional and commercial, which meant that local people felt rather excluded. Quinn (2005a) notes that the agenda of those driving the festivals is not always in harmony with local people (and with everyone's tastes!). As

Waterman notes in relation to his study on arts festivals, “arts festivals are cultural commodities, and as such symbolize some of the debates in contemporary human geography, providing examples of how culture is contested” (1998: 55). Culture – including questions of taste – is intricately related to issues of politics, power, exclusion and marginalisation (see Jackson, 1989). Thus, we must acknowledge that with an emphasis on consumption – and culture – other interests and agendas regarding place can be somewhat at odds (e.g. conflicts between locals and tourists; centre and periphery) (see Parkinson and Bianchini, 1993; Matarasso and Landry, 1999). Therefore, we must be critical of the ‘type’ of culture being referred to; who the intended audiences of consumption are; and the contestations and conflicts that exist within strategies of entrepreneurial governance that emphasise culture.

## ***2.2 Place Marketing***

Alongside (and related to) the role of culture and festivals within the entrepreneurial city, is place marketing (see Ward, 1998a; 1998b; Gold and Ward, 1994; Kearns and Philo, 1993). Marketers have long been interested in the promotion of images of place, as it is argued that place image is extremely influential in the decision-making of potential new investors, new residents and visitors (see Gertner and Kotler, 2004). As noted by Ward, “urban leaders began to spend more time on place promotion, investing in new cultural projects and focusing on selling the city in terms of new lifestyles and experiences” (2003: 118). As Ashworth and Voogd (1994: 39) note, although there is nothing new about places being promoted, a much more recent trend has seen the public sector applying marketing to places, as a particular philosophy of place management and governance (in more entrepreneurial ways). Indeed, Hubbard and Hall argue “the manipulation of city images, cultures and experiences has become probably the

most important part of the political armoury of urban governors and their coalition partners in the entrepreneurial era” (1998: 8). As such, Gotham argues that place marketing involves focusing on the ‘buyer’ and “adapting, reshaping and manipulating... images of place to be desirable to the targeted consumer” (2002: 1743). These pieces of literature not only emphasise the role of the public sector in entrepreneurial strategies of development, but also the notion that such strategies are targeted towards particular audiences and lifestyles. This makes me question the governance of entrepreneurial strategies in rural development (and the role of the public sector), but also who the perceived audiences are for such development initiatives – as this fundamentally affects the shape and nature of development.

In relation to New South Wales (Australia), Gibson (2002) noted how popular music – with other ‘creative’ industries, including craft, art, film and writing – have created a range of leisure activities, which have been used to ‘reshape’ regional identities and have enabled the region to be marketed and promoted to tourists and potential residents. He argued that this process then transforms places – through the cultural activities and the marketing – which increases the attractiveness of place, which raises property prices, making them prohibitive to low-income individuals (Gibson, 2002). This highlights the link between cultural practices, place marketing and potential exclusion. As such, gentrification associated with the promotion and marketing of a place, through its cultural and lifestyle associations can actually exclude and marginalize original communities and businesses (see Zukin, 1995; O’Connor and Wynne, 1996). Thus, the reimagining of the city – through entrepreneurial strategies – is a contested process and often leaves many city residents feeling excluded from the image that is portrayed of the place (which many note is often directed to the middle classes) (see Waitt, 1999; Gibson, 2005; Boyle and Hughes, 1991). Indeed, it is important

to acknowledge that people also hold quite different images of the same place (Gertner and Kotler, 2004). In this sense, different people may interpret a place in different ways; and indeed, the images of place that may appeal to some, won't appeal to others. Similarly, the way cultural activities are represented and marketed may also act as a barrier and as a result may marginalize or exclude particular individuals, based on issues of taste (see Lewis, 1990; Waterman, 1998). As the marketing of such cultural (and lifestyle) practices is increasingly becoming entwined with the marketing of place (and used within entrepreneurial strategies of governance), this shows how the politics of culture, taste and practice are also related to the politics of place (and marketing) more broadly. There is thus a need for a more in-depth socio-cultural analysis of place marketing strategies that use culture – and importantly an analysis of such a phenomenon in small rural places, which are often neglected from such academic commentary.

With recognition that place marketing also has the capacity to transform place in urban areas to appeal to particular audiences, this research asks whether (or rather, how) places are transformed in rural areas through marketing strategies. As Gotham (2002) emphasises, place marketing not only transforms the images of place, but also through this process, is rather targeted towards particular consumers and audiences. If not explicitly excluding individuals, the place marketing strategy potentially appeals to and benefits particular audiences<sup>6</sup>, with specific tastes, dispositions and lifestyles. Young *et al.* (2006: 1691) make a similar observation with regard to the regeneration of Manchester. They note that the way in which the city and its developments are promoted to particular audiences (those who are the 'desired' or target audience) contributes to the

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<sup>6</sup> See Waterman (1998) for discussion of how arts festivals and cultural attractions potentially appeal to and benefit particular audiences – notably cultural tourists and local middle classes.

exclusion of others. Of course, we must question who has the power within this process. Young *et al.* (2006) examine the role of various actors, such as estate agents, in actually reinforcing particular images of place, by focusing their own practices on particular audiences (in the case of Manchester, the young, cosmopolitan professionals). As Young *et al.* (2006: 1697) note, by focusing their marketing on young professionals, estate agents are therefore marketing a specific lifestyle associated with the desired individuals and the regenerated city. By attracting this target market, it is then anticipated that they will perform in particular ways, which will continually reproduce the cosmopolitan image of the city centre that is being marketed (Young *et al.*, 2006). Individuals, groups and tastes not associated with this marketing strategy then appear to be excluded (Young *et al.*, 2006):

Thus 'entrepreneurial' urban governance and development, the gentrification and reimagining of the inner city, the development of new lifestyles in the city centre (such as 'loft living') and a remodelling of the city centre towards consumption practices are often linked to exclusion, including a lack of political inclusiveness and accountability, the exclusion of those with low or no incomes and the socio-cultural exclusion of those deemed not to 'fit' the dominant vision or style of urban development (Young *et al.*, 2006: 1690)

The above quote and the work by Young *et al.* (2006) more broadly, encourages us to think much more critically about the processes involved in entrepreneurial governance and place marketing through lifestyle and cultural associations. It is rather apparent that the processes involved in such entrepreneurial governance strategies of place are likely to be deeply complex and contested – in recognition of the politics of culture *and* the politics of place. The current research seeks to extend our knowledge in this field, not only by examining through in-depth analysis

of three places, who the audiences are for specific place developments, and the struggles and contestations that exist within such processes, but exploring such a phenomenon in a rural context.

### ***2.3 Strategies of Place Distinctiveness***

Despite such a critical stance towards place marketing, it is clear that increasingly, places are adopting various marketing strategies in order to promote the distinctiveness of that particular place – in order to attract external investment and visitors. Thus, with increasing competition between places (and the need to attract investment and visitors), there is more and more emphasis on place distinctiveness. Ergo, notions of ‘place-making’<sup>7</sup> and ‘place distinctiveness’<sup>8</sup> have become fixed on the political agenda (see Partners for England, 2007; Wright and Lawlor, 2010; Yorkshire Forward, 2009). These moves to acknowledge and promote local place distinctiveness can also be associated with reports such as ‘Clone Town Britain’ by the New Economics Foundation (NEF, 2005), which acknowledges the way in which many towns have lost their distinctive character, due to increasing homogenisation and global chain stores. It has been argued by some that the marketing of places has actually led to the promotion of ‘sameness’ and to the destruction of local identity (Griffiths, 1998; Ashworth, 2002), as places adopt similar marketing strategies. However, Kavaratzis (2004: 70) argues that place branding is based upon and promotes the distinctive features of that place. As such, Kavaratzis (2004: 70) argues that place branding can reinforce local identity and promote community development and cohesion, in addition to

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<sup>7</sup> This refers to “the creation of high quality places to live and work” (Wright and Lawlor, 2010: 4). See also [www.scottishrenaissancetowns.com](http://www.scottishrenaissancetowns.com) for an initiative focused on place-making in small-towns in Scotland

<sup>8</sup> See also [www.scottishrenaissancetowns.com](http://www.scottishrenaissancetowns.com) for an initiative focused on small-towns in Scotland, which also seeks to draw on and promote the ‘distinctiveness’ of place.

achieving competitive advantage in relation to other places, for inward investment and tourism. Thus, 'place making' in its broadest sense has become of great importance in local economic development, particularly in terms of promoting local distinctiveness, differentiating destinations, and developing competitiveness (Amin and Thrift, 1994; Dredge and Jenkins, 2003). As Dredge and Jenkins assert, "distinctive destinations sell" (2003: 386).

Yorkshire's Regional Development Agency – Yorkshire Forward – claims that: "The potential to exploit distinctiveness as a driver for social and economic growth, particularly through tourism, is increasingly recognised by institutions and policy makers" (Yorkshire Forward, 2009: 49). Following their research on place distinctiveness, Yorkshire Forward (2009) strongly recommended implementing 'themed distinctiveness' within the region, arguing that this will potentially increase the appeal of Yorkshire and meet the region's strategic tourism aims to increase visitor spend by 5% per annum from 2009-2012 (ibid: 6)

But this is more widespread than just in Yorkshire. This process of place differentiation has also been used within Scotland (within towns which form the basis of this current study) and has been noted as examples of good practice within the Scottish Small Towns Report (Scottish Borders Council, 2006), as a way of challenging some of the problems that small towns face (e.g. economic and social issues). It has also been used in North America, where a number of towns have adopted various 'themed distinctiveness' strategies, including Leavenworth (WA), which has adopted a Bavarian theme (see Frenkel and Walton, 2000), and Roswell (New Mexico), which has adopted a UFO theme<sup>9</sup> (see Paradis, 2002).

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<sup>9</sup> However, arguably the North American examples represent more of a Disney-esque themed distinctiveness than the British cases.



## 2.4 Place Branding

Linked with place marketing and strategies of place distinctiveness is place branding<sup>10</sup>, which has become increasingly important within entrepreneurial strategies of governance over the last few years (see Gibson, 2005; Hannigan, 2003; Evans, 2003; Hauben *et al.*, 2002; Rainisto, 2003; Trueman *et al.*, 2004). As Cova (1996) argued, branding gives a specific and distinctive identity to a product. According to Freire, "brands are an important aspect of contemporary society which are used as a means of communication, identification and differentiation" (2005: 354-355). According to Bennett and Savani, "branding an area can help differentiate it from other places and hence greatly facilitate the promotion of its place product offer" (2003: 70; see also Louro and Cunha, 2001). They argue that this gives place a competitive edge (Bennett and Savani, 2003) – clearly addressing an entrepreneurial agenda.

Aaker argues, "a brand is a multidimensional assortment of functional, emotional, relational and strategic elements that collectively generate a unique set of associations in the public mind" (1996: 68). The brand incorporates perceptions of quality, values and feelings (Kavaratzis, 2005: 337). Arvidsson (2005: 235) argues that it creates, through symbolic communication, an ethical surplus (i.e. a shared experience; a common identity). The process of branding is therefore associated with the symbolic economy, whereby the aim is to attach meaning around the brand, which portrays particular experiences, attitudes, lifestyles and emotions (see Arvidsson, 2005: 239). When people buy a product, they are also buying the symbolic features incorporated into the brand (see Aaker, 1996). The brands (and

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<sup>10</sup> Also termed 'destination branding' (Morgan *et al.*, 2002; Brent-Ritchie and Ritchie, 1998) and 'geo-branding' (Freire, 2005)

the consumption of the brands) communicate messages about one's lifestyle and taste (see Comb and Crowther, 2000). The brand is seen to embody a whole range of social and cultural attributes and values (see Simoes and Dibb, 2001). It is not merely advertising, but is about building particular experiences and connotations around the brand (see Baker, 2007). Thus, it is a symbolic tool of communication (Freire, 2005). Kavaratzis (2005: 335) suggests that it is this relationship between the consumer and the brand that makes a successful brand. If the brand does not evoke a particular association, then it will not be successful (ibid). As Morgan *et al.* argue, branding is a form of communication and is "done with and not to the consumer" (Morgan *et al.*, 2002: 24). It is the consumer who continually reproduces and sustains the brand (Arvidsson, 2005: 236), through their own relationship with it.

With the recognised importance of brands in the corporate world (such as Nike), such mechanisms are increasingly central to economic governance (Arvidsson, 2005). This is not solely related to products, but increasingly as strategies of place management (see Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2005; Freire, 2005; Morgan and Pritchard, 2000; Anholt, 2002). As such, many cities have adopted branding strategies, including Leeds (see Ward, 1999), Birmingham and Sheffield (see Bramwell and Rawding, 1996). It is clear that many (predominantly ex-industrial) cities have been subject to place branding strategies in order to create a new image – one related to consumption rather than production (see Bramwell and Rawdin, 1996). Hence, the promotion of culture is often used within branding strategies (see Evans, 2003; Greenberg, 2003; Hannigan, 2004) and incorporated into city planning strategies (Evans, 2001). The place brands are designed to change the way in which places are perceived, and to make them appear more attractive (Kavaratzis, 2005: 334). They are designed to promote particular

meanings of place (and experiences), which are used to “orient the tourist experience” and differentiate the place from others (Freire, 2005: 356). As noted in the Regeneration and Europe Newsletter, from Dumfries and Galloway Council, “it has [to have] emotional appeal to draw in curious tourists, and is backed up by a strong marketing and product development plan” (R&E News, 2005: 4-5). They are thus used to create a particular clear, coherent and holistic identity for place, in order to seek particular kinds of investment (that ‘fit’ with the brand image), and go beyond the mere advertising and promotion of places (Kavaratzsis, 2005: 334; Freire, 2005; Rainisto, 2003: 3). Thus, place brands are used to manage place in particular ways (ibid). As Friere argues, “if tourism destinations have become not just a place but are also embedded with significance, one can conclude that places, like any other type of consumer product, should be managed as brands” (2005: 355). However, despite such discourse that places can be treated as products and can be neatly packaged with clear and coherent identities, from a critical geographical perspective (rather than a marketing perspective), this research asks whether this is really the case in practice, as places mean different things to different people. As place is deeply complex and contested, this research seeks to explore the various struggles and contestations that are likely to exist within strategies of place branding. This research is therefore rather critical of the idea that places can be branded with clear and coherent identities, in recognition of the diversity within place.

## ***2.5 Books (Food, Art) as Brand***

Further exploring place branding and marketing, it is also clear that culture is increasingly being used within the branding of places<sup>11</sup> (see Evans, 2003), as forms of entrepreneurial strategies of place development and management.

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<sup>11</sup> Of course we must acknowledge that cultural strategies are contested, as already discussed

Interestingly, this is also happening in rural areas and small rural places – not just large cities (see Yorkshire Forward, 2009). Thus, culture is not only being used with promoting the experiences of place (and cultural associations) through marketing, but also through actively branding places. As such, places are branded, through cultural associations, as Food Towns, Artists' Towns and Book Towns (to name a few).

In relation to Book Towns, Seaton and Alford (2001) suggest that a Book Town can be defined as a small, rural place, with a critical mass of second-hand and antique bookshops. Hay-on-Wye (Wales) was the world's first Book Town, developed in 1961 by entrepreneur Richard Booth (Seaton, 1999). He started by buying the old cinema and converting it into a bookshop. Before long, Booth called it the 'biggest second-hand bookshop in the world' (Seaton, 1999). Booth became rather successful and purchased more properties and converted them into bookshops. By the 1970s, Hay-on-Wye had become a Book Town – a town of books (Seaton, 1999). Prior to the Book Town development, Hay did not attract many visitors and was generally a town in decline (Seaton, 1999). With the advent of the Book Town recognition, Hay achieved national and international acknowledgment – partly because such a venture was novel and because Booth was a very good publicist (Seaton, 1999). The Book Town has attracted many visitors to the town since. Of course, it is interesting to note the type of visitor attracted to a Book Town. As Seaton notes "Virtually all of Hay's visitors are 'quality', rather than 'mass' tourists. Ninety per cent of them are educated, professional people with high levels of discretionary income (teachers, lecturers, doctors, senior managerial figures and dealers etc)" (1999: 391). With recognition of such an audience, this current research asks who the perceived audiences are of other place brand developments around cultural themes.

The development of the Book Town occurred organically, as Booth's second-hand book empire expanded in the town. It was not planned as a tourist attraction. Since this time, other bookshops and other culture-related businesses have opened in the town, in addition to more accommodation providers, cafes and restaurants (Seaton, 1999). From a town with no bookshops in 1960, the number of bookshops in the town has increased dramatically (Seaton, 1999). In 1997, there were 34 bookshops, which provided one of the main sources of employment in the town (alongside agriculture and the service industry) (Seaton, 1999). The Hay Literary Festival, started in 1988, also attracts many people to the town (80,000 annually; Yorkshire Forward, 2009) and raises the profile of the place (Seaton, 1999). As such, 500,000 tourists visit Hay each year (Yorkshire Forward, 2009). The Book Town has also increased property prices within the town (Seaton, 1999). With such physical, economic, cultural and social transformations in Hay, this research seeks to explore how other, similar brand developments have transformed the rural places.

Indeed, based on the success of Hay, Book Towns have become a global phenomenon and many are connected through the International Organisation of Book Towns (IOB). Towns include Fjaerland (Norway); Sysma (Finland); Montereaggio (Italy); and Redu (Belgium). Many of those in the IOB are European towns, although Book Town developments are taking place all over the globe, including Sidney-by-the-sea (British Columbia, Canada); and Stillwater (Minnesota, USA) (see McShane, 2002). Since the organic development of Hay-on-Wye as a Book Town, many of these other Book Towns have emerged through conscious decisions to adopt the brand (in recognition of the place development potential that they have) (see Seaton, 1999).

Seaton (1999) states that many of the Book Towns across Europe share a number of characteristics – they are rural; they all have small populations; they have marginal or peripheral locations (physically and/or perceptually); and they were all in a state of decline, with little tourism, before becoming Book Towns. All of the towns also use festivals and events as part of their place promotion and experience (Seaton, 1999). He claims that the Book Town brand has increased their tourism and retail sectors (thus, revitalising their economies), and has given these places a much stronger destination identity (ibid; Seaton, 1996a).

Seaton concludes his paper by asking, “one of the most interesting questions for the future is whether other kinds of specialisation, apart from books, may offer a means of achieving a unique destination image for small peripheral towns?” (1999: 398). That is exactly what has been done with other specialisations and niche markets (e.g. food and art). Thus, it is not only books that are being used with such regard. Food is also increasingly being used within promoting place (see Everett, 2010; Everett and Aitchison, 2008). It is acknowledged that food tourism has a role in place-making, by transforming and constructing place in particular ways (see Everett, 2010), which then features in place marketing, and attracts visitors (see Okumus *et al.*, 2007). This then impacts the regeneration of a place, and increasingly, rural areas, by attracting visitors and investment (see Everett, 2010; Everett and Aitchison, 2008). Indeed, Boyne and Hall (2004) argue that food tourism initiatives in rural areas can provide the opportunity for branding and place promotion initiatives. Art is also increasingly used within the promotion of place, and with the revitalisation of small rural places (see Hudson, 2005; Macleod, 2009). As such, the issues raised with regard to Book Towns are potentially more widespread and applicable to other ‘theme’ related place brand developments.

## 2.6 Branding Place: The Issues

Although similar processes can be seen within the branding of products in the corporate world, and places (see Kavaratzis, 2005), we must of course acknowledge that places are complex and varied (Trueman *et al.*, 2004). Indeed, Kotler (2004) argues that places are more difficult to brand than products. Place brands therefore must serve different aims, and target different individuals (audiences, consumers) simultaneously (Trueman *et al.*, 2004; Boyne and Hall, 2004). Through the case of Bradford, Trueman *et al.* note how cities (and their brands) are constantly changing; they are much less well-defined than product brands and are much more difficult to control. Despite such complexity, Kavaratzis (2004) argues that the brand needs to create a narrative for the whole place, as everything done in a city communicates messages about the city's brand. As Boyne and Hall acknowledge, "the development agencies of destinations, as places, regions and countries, continue to expend significant tourism marketing and economic development budgets on promotion of the destination as an explicit and coherent geographical entity" (2004: 81). Whilst Seaton (1999) acknowledges that places will potentially have lots of different and diverse attractions, he also argues that, to be successful in place branding through a cultural theme, a particular identity must become dominant:

The success of tourism in book towns demonstrates one of the most crucial laws of destination marketing but one which is still more disregarded than observed – the single concept *unique selling proposition*. This means that destinations are most likely to prosper when they promote clear, single, uniquely differentiated images, which makes their identities different from that of others. This is not to say that a destination cannot provide more than one attraction for the visitor (Hay offers riding, fishing, walking and other historic attractions which help to keep people in the area once they are

there) but it will only be known for one thing, and that one, if attractive and unique, will be the critical feature of its tourism identity (Seaton, 1999: 396-397)

Of course, we must critically explore the actual processes involved in how this identity gains dominance, and the various struggles and contestations that such a process raises. Kavaratzis argues that this “demands a broad acceptance of the brand as the guiding light for all marketing activities and not a consideration of the brand just as a promotional tool” (Kavaratzis, 2005: 336). This alludes to the all-encompassing nature of the brand. With this all-encompassing nature, Greenberg (2003) notes how most urban brands are managed centrally by the city authorities (with the assistance of professional marketers) and that the brand is integrated into the place through a range of private and public initiatives (see also, Rainisto, 2003). Despite this central control, Hankinson (2004: 111) argues that the effectiveness of place branding relies on successful relationships with key stakeholders. Indeed, as noted in the Regeneration and Europe Newsletter, from Dumfries and Galloway Council, “the initiative[s] will not work effectively unless there is very active community support for the theme” (R&E News, 2005: 4-5). However, with the diverse range of stakeholders who have different interests in particular places, it is recognised that it is very difficult (if not impossible) to actually devise a brand that all can agree on (see Palmer, 2002; Boyne and Hall, 2004).

This raises a number of issues for me with regard to our understanding of place branding in rural areas. First, with regard to the ‘central management of the brand’, it makes me question how place brands are managed in small rural towns, and whether there are any similarities to that which Greenberg (2003) notes in relation to urban brands. This thus questions the governance of such developments, in



recognition of place branding at different scales. As acknowledged by Seaton (1996b) in relation to the development of Book Towns, the extent to which Book Towns have received public sector support when development started has varied between places. It has also been noted that Book Town developments have also all emerged in slightly different ways, although the role of influential motivated individuals was noted as rather dominant within each development (see Seaton, 1996b; 1997b; 1997a; McShane, 2002). It is argued that the development of place brands is dependent on particular local circumstances, available finances and resources – and this varies between different scales (see Morgan *et al.*, 2004: 5). Despite such recognition, Morgan *et al.*'s (2004) focus is on national, regional and city level branding. Thus, we must question how such place brands actually emerge in small towns and rural areas. Presumably, small rural towns are likely to have less available finances and resources for such branding initiatives, compared to larger cities. With such a situation, it is important to analyse the applicability of such a place development model at that particular scale, and critically assess the similarities, differences and the challenges.

It also raises the issue of the singularity of the place brand, which requires buy-in, acceptance and agreement from key stakeholders. Any form of place development is likely to be a contested and conflicted process, as places are heterogeneous entities, with different people with different (and competing) demands, values and imaginaries (see Marsden *et al.*, 1993; Murdoch and Marsden, 1994; Short *et al.*, 1986; Cloke and Little, 1997; Murdoch and Pratt, 1997; Milbourne, 1997; Murdoch *et al.*, 2003; Massey, 1997; Cresswell, 2004). Thus, as Kotler (2004) identifies, local citizens will have conflicting views as to what their place is, and how (or if) it should be branded. Indeed, with regard to Book Towns, 'local' support for such developments has often been rather questionable (see Seaton, 1997b: 19;

Fordham, 2008). Thus, many such initiatives are fraught with scepticism, differences of opinion and conflict. In specific relation to rural areas, Murdoch *et al.* note “many groups now make claims upon rural space, but no single view is able to encompass the whole rural sphere. The outcome is a greater potential for conflict in and around the countryside” (2003:8). With such multiplicity, Marsden *et al.* (1993) acknowledge that a representation cannot capture everything. As Marsden *et al.* note, the rural is constructed through “competing and often conflicting principles linked to certain styles of living, working and recreation” (1993:9). Despite acknowledgement of the multiplicity of place, as Seaton (1999) argues, in order to be marketed ‘effectively’, a single identity of place must become dominant – according to destination marketing theory (see also Klein, 2000<sup>12</sup>). Similarly, as noted in the Regeneration and Europe Newsletter, from Dumfries and Galloway Council, “A town can really only market itself as a theme town if the theme it wants to employ eclipses other identities the town may have (R&E News, 2005: 4-5). As Frenkel and Walton (2000) note, the Bavarian theme is perceived to have become dominant in Leavenworth and is now the dominant economic activity in the area – it has become an integral part of the place. This emphasises the need to critically understand how such brands gain dominance, and indeed, the contestations and struggles that are likely to be involved in such a process.

However, Yorkshire Forward (2009) acknowledge that, whilst most places have distinctive characteristics, not all have a particular characteristic that appears to dominate above all others. As such, Yorkshire Forward notes, “there is a danger in such initiatives that decisions are made which are based on over-simplified, abstracted understanding of a place” (2009: 15). It is therefore argued that the

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<sup>12</sup> Klein (2000) argues that brands colonise and dominate public space

marketing and branding of places inevitably reduces the complexity of place – the brand or marketing campaign is merely a perceived (over)simplification of place (see Waitt, 1999). As Clifford and King argue, “the packaging of history as ‘heritage’ to create brands, such as ‘Bronte Country’, degrades cultural complexity” (2006: xii). Indeed, Clifford and King (1993) argue that places are distinctive because of the whole plethora of things in place. However, even if the brand is perceived to become dominant, we must not assume that this gains dominance in *everyone’s* association with that place. As one can imagine, with such complexity and multiplicity, the branding of a place can therefore potentially be divisive. It is therefore questionable how a place can be promoted through a clear and coherent single brand, for all people. As Kavaratzis (2004: 71) asks, “can city branding create in the minds of all people who encounter the city the feeling that they are dealing with an entity, with one thing, which they could have a relationship with?” Thus, the place branding perceived to be suitable for one audience may not appeal to all (see Bennett and Savani, 2003). Indeed, as Ashworth and Voogd (1994) acknowledge, individuals live rather different lives and lifestyles and will relate to the same place in different ways from others.

Therefore, through place branding, marketing may be targeted towards particular ‘types’ of people (e.g. executives and middle-classes) (see Cloke *et al.*, 1991a; b). In relation to nine place-rebranding case studies, Bennett and Savani (2003) note that the critics of place brands argue that they were designed to attract high-income and better-educated residents (and leisure facilities for them), thus marginalizing existing residents (and those with different tastes and lifestyles!). With regard to Book Towns, Seaton (1999) suggests that they “attract that most sought-after visitor, the ‘quality tourist’ – educated people in upper income, higher occupational groups who are the major book buyers throughout Europe” (Seaton,

1999: 397). As Urry (1990) notes, increasingly places are competing for these quality tourists – and as such, to be competitive, have had to develop a targeted marketing approach to niche markets. This process could potentially attract those who are interested in the brand to visit (and possibly relocate to) the place (see Yorkshire Forward, 2009: 38). It is fundamentally important therefore to examine who the perceived audiences are for such developments, and the associated conflicts and struggles that take place.

Through this process, place and rurality could potentially be changed (and commodified) in line with certain imaginaries (see Marsden *et al.*, 1993; Cloke, 1992; Pahl, 1965) for particular audiences (see Bennett and Savani, 2003). This transformation may be further developing what the town already has, or it may involve creating a whole new economy. According to Bennett and Savani (2003), all of the nine place-rebranding case studies in their research were controversial and fundamentally changed the places. Through such a process, places are made into attractive destinations – they are created and recreated for visitors to consume (see Urry, 1990; 1995). The place is then continually reconstructed around the brand (see Yorkshire Forward, 2009). Whilst bringing potential economic benefits to place, the brands, the cultural associations and the marketing also potentially change the place – the nature of the place and the social dynamics of the place (see Yorkshire Forward, 2009: 38; Gibson, 2002; Young *et al.*, 2006). In addition to attracting visitors (and potential residents) to the town, the brand also potentially attracts associated business investment (i.e. more bookshops; art galleries etc) (see Seaton, 1999). As Warnock and Laughlin (2006) note in relation to Abergavenny, with its increasing reputation as a 'foodie' destination, new food-related businesses have been attracted to the place and there has been an increase in visitor numbers with people seeking short breaks for

food. Similar issues were identified by Paradis (2002) regarding the development of the UFO theme at Roswell. He noted that the UFO theme was attractive to 'enthused outsiders', and reconstructed place around the brand, which shadowed the ranching and agricultural heritage of place. This not only highlights structural economic changes within the place, but arguably more interestingly, changes in the way in which the place is represented, promoted and packaged – as the brand gains dominance (see also Yorkshire Forward, 2009: 14). With such transformations within places, post-branding, this research therefore seeks to critically explore this in more detail, through the case studies – in order to understand how places are transformed, and the processes involved.

However, constructing the place around a single brand could reduce the diversity of place (Yorkshire Forward, 2009). It may also then appeal to a much smaller target audience – attracting only those directly interested in the theme. The diversity of the place is then hidden (and potentially lost), which could render the place rather exclusive. Other notions of place can also be marginalized through the process of branding (see Paradis, 2002). There could potentially be numerous representations and interpretations of place – all of which are perfectly valid – yet all of which are competing for dominance (ibid). Whilst there may appear to be a dominant single vision of place, shared by a group of individuals or communities – this can only be viewed as one interpretation of place. However, these dominant visions become the important basis for distinctiveness (see Yorkshire Forward, 2009: 17). In this sense, place distinctiveness is therefore a social process – a struggle of visions and an issue of power. Whilst Yorkshire Forward (2009) argues it fosters civic pride and engagement, it can also create disengagement from people who do not support the brand, or the associated festivals, events and

exhibitions. As noted by Shortall (2008), those who are just not interested in the development will not participate or offer support.

Indeed, alongside different understandings of place (and the contestations that this evokes), we must also consider that there are most likely different understandings about what the brand should be (or represent) and the experiences and values that are sought to be promoted through such a symbol. Within the development of Book Towns, it has been noted that there have been a whole variety of different motivations behind developments from different actors (see Seaton, 1996b; 1997b; 1997a; McShane, 2002). Not only do actors potentially have different motivations (and opinions and values), but also the place brand itself is subject to representation. As Warnock and Laughlin (2006) note, Food Towns in Britain have developed in a variety of ways – but also for a variety of reasons. Whilst some Food Towns are focused on a food festival (such as Abergavenny), with good quality produce, leading chefs and food writers – attracting extensive media attention – others are more interested in promoting healthy eating and local produce (such as Bridport). Nantwich (Cheshire) is also perceived to be a Food Town by Warnock and Laughlin (2006) although they note that the focus of that initiative is to promote local food to local people – rather than tourism. However, Ludlow has immense tourism appeal for its food – fine dining; high quality food producers; major food festival; and local produce markets (ibid). This shows that the meaning of a Food Town (the values it promotes and the experiences it represents) also differ. With such a multiplicity of meaning, and differing of viewpoints, it is vital to understand how particular meanings gain dominance within place – as a social process.

This section therefore makes us question not only the governance of such developments, but also who such brands are targeted towards, the processes involved in the way in which the brand gains dominance, and the cultural politics and contestations that the brands evoke. As Paradis (2002) concludes, we must explore such processes in specific places, but also compare them with other theme towns, in order to explore the commonalities and differences.

## ***2.7 Entrepreneurial Governance in Practice: The Issues***

Through exploring the processes involved in place branding more specifically, we must also explore notions of entrepreneurial governance and the associated issues more broadly, as the development of place brands can be viewed as entrepreneurial strategies of place management. As such, this thesis intends to critically examine the application of entrepreneurial governance – through place branding – in rural areas. As discussed in the previous section, we must critically explore how such place developments actually develop – the processes involved.

Whilst it has been acknowledged that both urban and rural areas are increasingly adopting entrepreneurial strategies of place governance (see Little, 2001), it must also be acknowledged that as a model of governance, it is open to contestation and takes many different forms in practice across different contexts. As mentioned, with increasing emphasis on the private sector, one of the key features of entrepreneurial governance is the notion of 'public-private partnership' (Harvey, 1989; Hubbard and Hall, 1998). Such partnerships became increasingly commonplace from the 1980s and were designed to involve actors beyond local government, with the intention of stimulating private investment (Edwards *et al.*, 2000). However, whilst Harvey (1989) places significant emphasis on the role of the private sector in urban development, Boyle and Hughes (1994) note that in a

British context, the role seems somewhat overstated, and that the public sector is not adopting a purely facilitative role (see also Wood, 1998). Indeed, through the case of the redevelopment of East Manchester, Ward (2003) argues that entrepreneurial governance requires more state involvement, rather than less. This can also be seen in Yorkshire Forward's role (as a Regional Development Agency) with regard to place distinctiveness strategies (see Yorkshire Forward, 2009) and the public sector's role in urban place branding (see Greenberg, 2003). This potentially shows a rather pro-active role of the public sector in development initiatives. The role of the public sector is also noted in the 'place making charter for destination management' (Partners for England, 2007). According to this charter, local authorities have an important role in leading and developing destinations – creating a competitive environment for investment and visitors. In terms of the application of entrepreneurial strategies of governance in rural areas, this research seeks to explore the actual governance of rural place development (i.e. how the brands were developed), and the role of the public and private sector in the process.

Despite acknowledgement that the role (and input) of the public and private sectors is likely to differ between developments, it has also been argued by some that partnerships between sectors have led to the distinctions between (and role of) each sector becoming much less visible (e.g. Stoker, 1998). Where decisions used to be made through the formal channels of local government, increasingly decision-making has become much more fragmented and spread across a variety of actors through partnerships (Ward, 2003). These include various Urban Regeneration Companies and Consortiums, similar to those seen in the regeneration of East Manchester (see Ward, 2003). Such partnerships and collaborative entrepreneurial ventures (between the private and public sector) are



responsible for the developments, including their budgets and the decision-making. However, we must question how such entrepreneurial strategies are delivered, in practice, in smaller, rural areas (as opposed to larger urban places). Indeed, it is important to explore the nature of entrepreneurial governance in rural development, and the way such entrepreneurial strategies are actually implemented.

As these entrepreneurial governance styles are implemented in rural areas too, it is clear that notions of partnership are also applicable (Little, 2001; Goodwin, 1998; Edwards *et al.*, 2000; Defra, 2000; Shucksmith, 2000; Osborne *et al.*, 2002; Shortall, 1994; Woods, 1998). Indeed, rural policy in Scotland emphasises the role of partnership between different sectors (see Scottish Government, 2010; Scottish Borders Council, 2006; Slee and Snowdon, 1997). However, such partnerships are not solely between the public and private sectors. Indeed, Wright and Lawlor note that, with regard to Scottish planning policy, "communities should be active participants in placemaking" (2010:7). Interestingly, notions of partnership in rural development seem to place significant emphasis on the third sector (community-based initiatives), in addition to the public and private – somewhat different to the notion of public-private partnership in entrepreneurial governance (see Hubbard and Hall, 1998). Therefore, one needs to critically examine how such entrepreneurial rural place development initiatives actually come into being – with recognition that the application of such an entrepreneurial governance strategy is likely to take a rather different form (shape) to that in an urban context.

In addition to the actual governance of partnership, and who is involved and who is not, we must consider the definition of partnership. According to Slee and Snowdon, "partnerships are an arrangement in which objectives are shared and a

common agenda is developed between different agencies in pursuit of a common goal" (1997: i). However, as has been acknowledged, there are many different actors involved in governance, with potentially different agendas and motivations (Harvey, 1989; Hubbard and Hall, 1998). Thus, conflict is a potential issue (Stoker, 1998; Goodwin, 1998). As Sidaway (1998) notes in relation to rural development in Scotland, conflict arises due to a lack of understanding, competing interests and/or opposing beliefs.

In addition to a conflict of interests, the extent of each actor's involvement is often rather unclear within developments. Jones and Little (2000) examined the Rural Challenge programme, which was designed to stimulate private sector and community involvement in rural regeneration, and found that the desired goal of partnership did not really materialise. Little claims, "While the rhetoric of partnership has been strong in relation to national rural policy... commitment to partnership at the local level has been less successful" (2001: 99). Similarly, Wright and Lawlor note, "despite much excellent guidance and policy from local and national government, there are still gaps: between the worlds of placemaking and community empowerment, and between rhetoric and reality... placemaking and community empowerment still seem a long way from true partners" (Wright and Lawlor, 2010: 5). These pieces of research really question the contribution of each actor within development, and problematises the notion of partnership in practice.

The nature and extent of such community involvement is, of course, a matter for debate, claim and counter claim by interested parties. Thus, we must also acknowledge the issue of power within partnership arrangements, as actors are likely to have different levels of power (see Edwards *et al.*, 2000; Sidaway, 1998).

This potentially enables the development to be shaped in particular ways, by those in positions of power:

Coalition and alliance formation is so delicate and difficult a task that the way is open here for a person of vision, tenacity, and skill (such as a charismatic mayor, a clever city administrator or a wealthy business leader) to put a particular stamp upon the nature and direction of urban entrepreneurialism, perhaps to shape it, even to particular political ends (Harvey, 1989:7)

However, Storey (2004) argues, in relation to rural development in Ireland, that partnerships do empower local people and that EU funding directives (such as Leader) really emphasise partnership working. Of course, we must be critical of what we mean by such terms as 'local' and 'community'. As Burnett (1998) comments, notions of community (and local) are central to rural development, although she acknowledges that these terms in their own right are contested. Indeed, Shields (1992) notes that 'communities' are not homogeneous entities, but are fundamentally heterogeneous in character. There are as such multiple interpretations of what we mean by the term 'community' and different ideas as to the kind of involvement that is sought (see Warburton, 1998). Therefore, we must be critical of the actual intention of partnerships, their aims and who is actually included in such an arrangement (see Edwards *et al.*, 2000).

Indeed, even when communities are engaged and empowered, are all aspects of a 'community' included? Gallacher (2009) asks this in relation to the Scottish Renaissance Towns initiative – which is a place-making initiative focusing on 'town teams' driving forward shared visions, as agreed in 'town charters'. This approach draws together a range of actors, although Gallacher notes that some groups are

not really involved. With regard to the same initiative, Carswell (2009) notes that such initiatives need to represent the 'community', in all its complexity, and as such should understand the range of actors, perspectives and lifestyles at play. However, we must recognise that, although multiple ideologies and imaginaries exist, not all have equal power. Some ideologies and imaginations become powerful, dominant and hegemonic (Mitchell, 2000). Within the development of place brands in rural areas as entrepreneurial strategies of governance, it is therefore important to critically explore how such developments are governed, and indeed, the contestations, conflicts and power struggles that take place.

In her research of several area-based rural development programmes in Ireland – which focus heavily on notions of partnership and community participation – Shortall (2008) claims that non-participation is seen as a problem and those who do not participate are perceived as 'excluded'. There is therefore an assumption that participation is the norm and that individuals should participate. Many such rural development partnerships thus seek to develop social inclusion (ibid). However, Shortall (2008) argues that non-participation can represent a valid choice and, following the work of Fiorina (1999), that participation should not be seen as the default act. As Fiorina (1999) argues, individuals participate when they want to – and when they are motivated. Those who are motivated will therefore participate, and those who are not motivated (or uninterested; disengaged etc) will not. Thus, one must acknowledge the role of a few motivated individuals in local rural development activities (Shortall and Shucksmith, 1998; McAreavey, 2006). But we must also acknowledge that such processes will be affected by micro-politics – personality clashes; abuses of power; and differences of opinion (see McAreavey, 2006).

Through such an emphasis on participation – and indeed, community-based initiatives – the views of some (those who participate) will therefore potentially become more dominant (see Fiorina, 1999; Shortall, 2008). Of course, we must also not assume that participation refers to equal participation (Shortall, 2008). Individuals and groups participate in different ways – with different voices and views – and some of these will gain more power than others (Edwards *et al.*, 2000; Shortall, 2004). This further problematises notions of partnership – not only highlighting differences between each sector (e.g. private, public, community), but also within each sector, as communities are not homogeneous. With regard to 'communities', MacKinnon (2002) asks whether we are referring to a 'community of interests', or a 'community of place' (e.g. those resident in a particular place)? However, Storey (1999) argues that such a distinction between communities is not considered in many development discourses, and as such there is an assumption that those in the same place will have common interests and views, which is obviously problematic. Thus, there are potentially several different 'communities of interest' in the same place (Slee and Snowdon, 1997). As the Rural Forum notes, "it is tempting to assume that everyone living in a particular geographical area constitutes the local community, but this may not be the case" (1997: i). As such, not all 'communities' are necessarily involved. This makes the notion of partnership working contested.

Indeed, even though we have problematised notions such as 'community', it has been documented how European development initiatives are heavily built on such notions (see Ray, 1996; 1997). There is therefore an emphasis on community-based initiatives, which rely on self-help, 'bottom-up', economic development (see MacKinnon, 2002; Shortall and Shucksmith, 1998). Notions of community engagement and local participation in rural development are also high on the

political agenda in Scotland (see Wright and Lawlor, 2010:4; Simpson, 2009; Scottish Government, 2010: 4; see also Scottish Borders Council, 2006). Indeed, Atterton (2001) also notes the role of civil society ('communities') and the business community within rural restructuring in Scotland<sup>13</sup>. Thus, MacKinnon (2002) notes an increasing emphasis on including a range of key 'local' actors, with a 'shared purpose' and vision, within local rural development initiatives (MacKinnon, 2002). Of course, this is likely to be a conflicted process. With this increased emphasis on community development in rural areas, this research therefore seeks to explore the role of the 'community' in strategies of entrepreneurial rural place development.

In addition to the public sector, private sector, community groups and motivated individuals, increasingly, there are other bodies (such as Cittaslow; Slow Food Movement; Transition Towns; Fairtrade Towns; Book Towns), which offer models for place development (see Yorkshire Forward, 2009). As it is clear that place developments seem to emerge in slightly different ways, it is therefore important to examine the form that entrepreneurial governance can take in different contexts, such as smaller, rural places. It will therefore explore the role of different actors, and note the similarities and differences between the urban experiences of such entrepreneurial strategies of place management (e.g. as identified by Hubbard and Hall, 1998), with the rural experience.

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<sup>13</sup> Atterton (2001: 1) uses the term 'civil society' as 'kind of third sector', encompassing a range of social relations – between individuals, friends, family, community and voluntary groups and organisations.

## 2.8 Chapter Summary

Hopefully, the sections within this chapter have set the context for the current research, which examines the development of place brands in rural Dumfries and Galloway (Scotland). It raises the questions of how and why rural place brands develop; the types of struggles and contestations that are likely to exist within the branding process; and alludes to the potential audience of such brands.

As discussed, we have witnessed a shift to more entrepreneurial styles of governance, where places are increasingly in competition with other places for tourists and investment (see Hubbard and Hall, 1998). At the same time, we have witnessed increasing emphasis on places as sites of consumption. Through such entrepreneurial strategies of development – with an emphasis on consumption – the use of culture within strategies of urban development has been widely noted. This is also very much associated with strategies of place marketing, and more recently place branding, as strategies of place distinctiveness. This association between culture and place branding is one that has not received enough critical analysis. As Morgan *et al.* argue, “research... needs to explore the relationships between culture and branding” (2004: 15). This thesis intends to address this shortfall, and also argue that this is not solely an urban phenomenon, but increasingly a rural one too.

The literature reviewed in this chapter has encouraged us to be critical of the ‘type’ of culture used in developments – the ‘type’ of consumption created – and the intended audience for such development. It has encouraged us to critically explore strategies of place marketing, the processes involved, and its effects (such as how place is transformed). The literature has also pointed to a recent (yet increasingly important) trend of place branding, whereby notions of branding that are common

in the corporate world are applied to places. Through critically engaging with the literature on this field, it is clear that there are a number of issues that need further exploration. According to the principles of place branding, the brand must become the dominant and holistic identity of place – in an all-encompassing way. However, it is clear that as places mean different things to different people, this process is likely to be a hugely conflicted one.

What is also clear is that the application of place branding in small rural places can be seen as strategies, to compete with other places and attract investment and visitors. They can thus be viewed as entrepreneurial strategies of place management. Such governance strategies are widely documented in urban contexts, and are gaining increasing importance and recognition in rural areas too. However, this thesis intends to explore the different forms that entrepreneurial strategies of place governance take in rural areas compared to the urban. For example, whereas the notion of public-private partnership is seen as a key feature of an urban entrepreneurial strategy, this research questions the form of such partnerships in rural place developments, and explores the role of the community sector and motivated individuals. This research therefore examines how (i.e. the governance) and why these small rural places developed place brands, as well as the contestations and struggles that such a process evokes. As Morgan *et al.* acknowledge “although there is a growing body of work on the process of destination branding, there are no studies that investigate the extent to which these brands impact on the populations of these [places]... we still have little understanding of the extent to which place brand management is a collective activity embraced by residents and smaller trade operators” (2004: 14-15). This thesis seeks to address this situation, in relation to rural place brand development.



Arguably, the development of place brands and strategies of place distinctiveness, such as around food, art and books, not only reduce the complexity and heterogeneity of place, but will arguably appeal to individuals with particular tastes. This research therefore asks whom the perceived audiences are of such developments. Thus, in addition to understanding such developments through an entrepreneurial governance and place development perspective, the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu allows us to explore these specific cases in detail. This will be explored in the following chapter.

### **Chapter Three: Bourdieu, Taste and Place**

It has been widely noted (and discussed in the previous chapter) that place branding, marketing and promotion strategies are designed to attract visitors to place (see Gold and Ward, 1994). As also noted, culture is often used within this process (see Kearns and Philo, 1993), as are festivals (see Waterman, 1998: 60). Increasingly, this is not solely the case within urban areas, but rural contexts too (see Bayliss, 2004). However, one must critically examine who the actual audiences are (or perceived to be) for such developments, with recognition that individuals have different taste formations and practices. As a case in point, Prentice and Andersen (2003: 17) state that the majority of the audience at the Edinburgh International Festival are “almost exclusively middle class”. Just as festivals potentially appeal to individuals with particular tastes, so too may place branding and marketing strategies (see Gotham, 2002: 1743). Place brands are thus being used to attract specific consumers, and are being imbued with particular symbolic meanings and associations, in order to portray various lifestyle experiences (see Arvidsson, 2005 for discussion on brands). However, the process of branding place is likely to be a contested one, as the brand and the place become sites of contestation (i.e. the thing that is struggled over). Therefore, what the brand and the place itself means and represents is contested, with individuals seeking to represent the brand and the place in particular (and often competing and different) ways. Arguably, the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984) not only allows us to explore tastes and consumption, but also the various struggles and contestations that may be present through place branding (particularly through his notions of the struggle for legitimacy and symbolic violence). Thus, Bourdieu (1984) provides a useful theoretical framework – that acts as a tool, which guides my thinking (Cloke *et al.*, 1991) in relation to the development of place brands.

### **3.1 Place Branding and Bourdieu**

Bourdieu's approach seeks to overcome the dichotomy between structuralism and individualism; and indeed between theory and practice (Lane, 2000). His theoretical position is firmly rooted in practices. For Bourdieu, individuals are not entirely driven by free will, but are equally not completely controlled by objective structures (see Lane, 2000). He argues that both are present. One of Bourdieu's central concepts is that of habitus. Habitus is the "mediating link between objective social structures and individual action and refers to the embodiment in individual actors of systems of social norms, understandings and patterns of behaviour, which, while not wholly determining action (as in the objectivist model) do ensure that individuals are more disposed to act in some ways than others" (Painter, 2000: 242). Habitus thus provides an alternative explanation of social action, which is neither solely conscious existential free choice (such as Sartre) nor unconscious compliance to a structural law (such as in structuralism) (Lane, 2000). It is, instead, a combination of the two different approaches.

Habitus is a system of (objectively) internalised dispositions, which guide behaviour by providing individuals with a sense of how to behave, without needing to consciously decide (Jenkins, 2002; Thompson, 1991; Grenfell, 2004; Bourdieu, 1993; 1980; 1990). Although habitus does not fully control behaviour, individuals make their own decisions, which are (unconsciously) guided by habitus – ensuring that individuals are more disposed to behave in some ways than others (and this differs between individuals). This develops over time, through experience and within a particular social condition – thus making it stable and durable (Thompson, 1991). As habitus develops in particular social conditions – the objective reality – it

is seen to be determined by one's class and social position (Lane, 2000). Nevertheless, one's habitus may evolve and change, depending on events in one's life (or a change in social conditions) (Bourdieu, 1977:54). Thus, through habitus, individuals are disposed to have particular lifestyles, tastes and preferences, which tend to be in tune with their social conditions (see Lane, 2000). Such lifestyles and dispositions symbolise one's social position and can be markers of distinction (Lane, 2000).

However, the concept of habitus has been criticised as being too structuralist in character (Jenkins, 2002). Because of the emphasis placed on objective social structures (e.g. class) in fostering particular dispositions, the role of the individual was afforded less emphasis (see Lane, 2000). Habitus has also been criticised as giving too much emphasis to the role of the unconscious (Lane, 2000); and for being too unified (Lahire, 2004; Bennett *et al.*, 2009). It has been argued that habitus is dispersed and plural – that there is not one habitus guiding behaviour (e.g. affected by class), but multiple – affected by class, age, gender *and* ethnicity (Bennett *et al.*, 2009). Thus, this broadens Bourdieu's notion of habitus, acknowledging that it is not solely linked to issues of class, but a range of other factors. However much the notion of habitus is debated or criticised – regarding the extent to which it is objective, yet subjective; stable, yet changes; unconscious, yet relatively conscious – I think it provides a useful tool for allowing us to think through some broader issues around taste and practices, as it attempts to acknowledge both the influence of social structures, as well as individual subjectivity.

### 3.2 Taste

Bourdieu (1984; 1978) argues that taste (e.g. for music, art, fashion, sports, literature etc.) is a marker of class position, status and social distinction and is linked with one's social origin (Painter, 2000; Bennett *et al.*, 2009<sup>14</sup>). As Chaney (1996) argues, lifestyles are markers of one's status and distinction. One's consumption behaviour can represent their social position. Chaney argues "lifestyles are important because they are practices imbued in their social contexts with aesthetic as well as structural significance" (1996: 98). According to Bourdieu (1984), not only does one's tastes have connotations of their position, but one's social position also gives you a particular taste for certain practices:

Taste is a practical mastery of distributions which makes it possible to sense or intuit what is likely (or unlikely) to befall – and therefore to befit – an individual occupying a given position in social space. It functions as a sort of social orientation, a 'sense of one's place', guiding the occupants of a given place in social space towards the social positions adjusted to their properties, and towards the practices or goods which befit the occupants of that position. It implies a practical anticipation of what the social meaning and value of the chosen practice or thing will probably be, given their distribution in social space and the practical knowledge the other agents have of the correspondence between goods and groups (Bourdieu, 1984: 466-467)

Bourdieu acknowledges that taste can unite and also separate people – it can be a point of commonality, or a barrier between individuals and social groups – as taste differs between and within class fractions. As Bourdieu notes, "taste is a match-maker; it marries colours and also people, who make 'well-matched' couples" (1984:243). As Waterman (1998) notes in relation to arts festivals, what is

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<sup>14</sup> E.g. the working class are more likely to dislike paintings and jazz music and more likely to like fish and chips

considered 'good' by some, won't be by others. There is therefore an issue of taste that will separate and divide, based on different taste formations:

Like every sort of taste, it unites and separates. Being the product of the conditioning associated with a particular class of conditions of existence, it unites all those who are the product of similar conditions while distinguishing them from all others. And it distinguishes in an essential way, since taste is the basis of all that one has – people and things – and all that one is for others, whereby one classifies oneself and is classified by others (Bourdieu, 1984:56)

Thus, as Bourdieu (1984) notes, different arts and activities will appeal to different people, based on their habitus and dispositions. He argues that those within the same social class share a similar habitus and taste; however, it will vary across social groups (*ibid*). As Bennett *et al.* suggest in relation to contemporary UK, "class remains a central factor in the structuring of contemporary cultural practice in Britain: Class matters" (2009:52). It is argued that one's preferences (e.g. for food) and lifestyle are associated with their class position (see Warde, 1997<sup>15</sup>), and that one's cultural consumption can also exhibit social distinction (see Warde and Tomlinson, 1995):

Choosing according to one's tastes is a matter of identifying goods that are objectively attuned to one's position and which 'go together' because they are situated in roughly equivalent positions in their respective spaces, be they films or plays, cartoons or novels, clothes or furniture; this choice is assisted by institutions – shops, theatres... critics, newspapers, magazines – which are themselves defined by their position in a field and which are chosen on the same principles (Bourdieu, 1984:232)

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<sup>15</sup> Warde (1997) argues that class affects taste in food.

In relation to the development of place brands, around food, art and books, this makes me question whether such brands could potentially be divisive or exclusionary – as they potentially appeal to individuals with particular tastes, from particular social positions. Whilst some argue that taste and practices are a marker of social position, others argue that the relationship is less clear and more ambiguous.

One who argues that taste is a marker of position is Bourdieu. Bourdieu (1984) argues that these practices also reproduce class positions. The higher classes tend to go to the theatre, museums, galleries, they read and own paintings – somewhat different to lower social classes (Bennett *et al.*, 2009). Skeggs (2005: 50), through an example of popular culture, argues that there has been a shift from viewing class as linked with one's economic position, to one based on an individual's cultural practices. Skeggs concludes her chapter by arguing that "the class struggle is being waged on a daily basis through culture as a form of symbolic violence, through relationships of entitlement that are legitimised and institutionalised, and it is these processes that set limits on who can and cannot belong" (2005:67). However, of course, class is a deeply complex and contested term (see Savage *et al.*, 1992). We cannot view class as representing homogeneous categories. As Butler (1995a) notes in relation to the 'middle classes' – there is a broad range of individuals, in different occupations, with different levels of income – which can all be interpreted as 'middle class'. He furthered this complexity, by noting that even the service class of the middle classes cannot be seen as a homogeneous entity (Butler, 1995). As such, it is difficult to make generalisations about individuals, with such heterogeneity and complexity surrounding different class fractions.

Savage *et al.* (1992) note the complex relationship between leisure practices and class position. They do not just acknowledge that the middle classes have different practices from the working classes, but they note the differences between class fractions. Thus, the middle classes do not have a unified taste for particular leisure activities. Their research identified three categories within the middle classes, with distinct tastes, lifestyles, interests and practices<sup>16</sup> (potentially implying different habitus between class fractions). This research not only acknowledges multiplicity within the middle classes, but also different tastes for leisure activities. However, as seen within Savage *et al.*'s (1992) work, categorising an individual's taste is problematic, as not all individuals within a particular class (or class fraction) necessarily share the same taste formations (or indeed, have distinctive consumption patterns). Indeed Bulmer (1975a,b) problematises the relationship between class position and cultural practices – acknowledging that class is much more fragmentary – and Murdoch and Marsden (1991) argue there is not a single culture associated with the middle classes – or even the service class. Urry (1995a) also acknowledges that leisure activities vary between and within different fractions. In this sense, not everyone interpreted as being in the 'service class' partakes in the same activities. Individuals have different tastes (see Urry, 1995a). Indeed, Chaney also argues that taste has become less firmly differentiated, and less stable than Bourdieu suggested (2002: 98). This makes the understanding of different taste formations, based on issues of class, rather problematic and contested.

Savage *et al.* (1992: 101) question whether Bourdieu's account can actually be generalised into the UK context – indeed, whether Bourdieu's work covers everyone. Savage *et al.* conclude by arguing “the concept of social class, in our

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<sup>16</sup> See Savage *et al.* (1992: 109) for greater elaboration.



terms, is not a totalising one" (1992: 211). They see that social class collectivities form, to some extent, from the relationships and exploitations of various assets (such as property; cultural; organisational) – although this cannot be isolated from numerous other factors, such as context (Savage *et al.*, 1992). In this sense, different assets have different power in different contexts and can be transferred into other forms of assets. As Savage *et al.* note, "these class assets define the terrain on which class collectivities form, rather than specify the nature of social class *per se*" (1992: 211). As such, classes are much more complex: the number of social classes is contested; they are not necessarily clearly coherent social categories; the boundaries between them are blurred; and there are not necessarily clearly distinctive consumption patterns within (or between) every faction (Savage *et al.*, 1992). Thus classes are not unified and do not have clear and distinct internally coherent tastes (Bennett *et al.*, 2009). As Bennett *et al.* (2009: 27) found in their research, whilst higher-level professionals expressed a high rate of liking for Impressionist paintings, a larger proportion of professionals liked landscapes, which is a taste shared with 44% of semi-skilled and unskilled workers in their sample (Bennett *et al.*, 2009: 27). This makes taste much more complex and potentially problematises understandings that certain practices and tastes are associated with dispositions that have developed in specific social conditions. In this sense, specific genres of art do not necessarily have to be enjoyed and appreciated solely by individuals within specific social positions.

Peterson's (1992) work on the cultural omnivore adds to this contested understanding of taste and practice and challenges Bourdieu's work somewhat. He suggested that certain fractions of the middle-classes have a particular taste, which is very different to other fractions of the middle-classes and the working classes (see Bourdieu, 1984). Peterson (1992), instead, suggests that the middle

classes consume a whole range of cultural forms – high and low, elite and popular culture. Thus, his work challenges the distinction between high and low culture and questions Bourdieu's assumption that the middle-classes consume high, elite and legitimate culture, leaving the working-classes to consume mass and popular forms. This acknowledges that ones' tastes and practices cannot be simply reduced to their class position; and therefore that it is problematic to assume relationships between cultural practices and an individual's characteristics (such as age; gender; class). Whilst there may be some associations, this cannot be seen as totally representing reality.

However, one's socio-economic position does appear to be associated somewhat with an individual's cultural practices. Interestingly, a report by Chamberlain *et al.* (2008) for the Scottish Government, found that within a survey of 1,762 11-15 year olds "two in five young people (40%) living in the least deprived areas have read for pleasure at least once a week, compared with just 16% of those living in the most deprived areas" (Chamberlain *et al.*, 2008: 17). Thus, there appears to be some sort of relationship between reading participation and deprivation levels, with the least deprived children reading more. Similarly, in relation to art, Bourdieu and Darbel (1991) argue that an individual's attendance to an art gallery was linked with their class position and level of education. Bennett *et al.* (2009) found a similar relationship in that "the more educated and those in higher occupations frequent art galleries and museums more often and own art in greater proportion than any other section of the population" (2009:115). Similarly, according to research by Yellow Book consultants (2005):

The higher an individual's social class, household income and education, the more likely they are to visit museums, art galleries and other types of

cultural attractions... Older people... and those without children are the most frequent museum/gallery visitors... Those with a household income of £30,000 or more are twice as likely to have visited than those who earn less than £17,500, whilst people with a Masters degree or PhD are three times as likely to have been to a museum/gallery as people with no formal qualifications (Yellow Book, 2005: 30).

Despite such acknowledgement, it is not solely class (or socio-economic position) that affects one's practices. Savage *et al.* (1992) also note how age and gender affects leisure practices and Bennett *et al.* (2009) found that age was a significant factor in visual art taste. As Wynne notes, "in spite of their [new middle class] homogeneous housing tenure and residential conditions, there are marked differences in socio-cultural life which relate to the degree of educational capital possessed, social origin, gender and occupation" (1998: 24). Research has also found that age also affects attendance at galleries and museums. With regard to attendance at museums and art galleries, the report by Chamberlain *et al.* (2008) found that only 45% of young people in their survey (n=1,762) had been to a museum or gallery, other than as part of a school trip, in the last year (Chamberlain *et al.*, 2008: 12). The report also found that young people living in a household where no parents work were more likely to not visit museums and galleries, compared to those with both parents working (Chamberlain *et al.*, 2008: 12). Of course, we must be critical of such findings. First, there are a diverse range of museums and galleries – with some potentially being more appealing to younger audiences than others. Second, is the issue of access – and that young people may not be able to access museums and galleries (i.e. because of transport). In this sense, it does not necessarily imply that young people are uninterested. Finally, young people may partake in other (different) cultural activities, away from the more formal spaces of museums and galleries. My

critique of this research somewhat problematises the relationship between cultural practices and age and emphasises that there are potentially many different factors involved within the structuring of taste and practices. It cannot be easily reduced to issues of age, or socio-economic position.

In relation to the attendance at 11 arts festivals in the East Midlands, Maughan and Bianchini (2003) claim that a significant proportion of attendees were over 45 years of age and that the vast majority were also white. They also note that those in manual and less skilled occupations tended to be rather underrepresented at the festivals, compared to those in more professional occupations (2003: 21). However, the festivals that they researched included the Leicester Comedy Festival, Art on the Map in Lincolnshire, Buxton Festival (and fringe), Leicester Belgrave Mela and Derby Caribbean Carnival (Maughan and Bianchini, 2003). These can all be defined as 'arts festivals', but are extremely diverse. For example, the Mela and Carnival are rather different to the Buxton Festival, which focuses on opera, music and literature. As such, arguably, different audiences will be attracted to the different events (with different ages; socio-economic positions; levels of education and ethnicity). Whilst we should acknowledge the role of wider structures (such as class) – and the differences between different fractions – we must also acknowledge the role of individual choice (see Warde and Tomlinson, 1995). Thus, it is difficult to clearly associate tastes and practices with social position. Chaney (1996) thus argues that Bourdieu's work is too structural, despite him aiming to transgress such a boundary. As Chaney argues "it is not clear that a particular style of taste will be associated with high or lower class position" (1996: 57). This implies a situation that is more fragmented and contested. Whilst relatively broad patterns related to lifestyle can be identified, it is not always easy to associate these with particular social positions (see Chaney, 1996).

This section has begun to grapple with the complexities surrounding an individual's tastes and practices. Whilst some argue that an individual's class position affects their dispositions and practices (and consumption habits), others identify similar tastes across class positions. Some suggest that age, gender and ethnicity also affect one's dispositions and tastes. Others argue that there is also an element of individual choice. However, what has been central within all these pieces of research is a preoccupation with understanding consumption behaviours. Alongside academic inquiries into consumption, tourism and leisure agencies are also interested in understanding consumers. This is obviously with the intention of effective marketing, to desired audiences. As Chaney (1996) acknowledges, the consumption of products and goods is of notable interest to marketing organisations, which are keen to sell products to consumers. The market can be segmented as such, based on leisure and lifestyle trends. This kind of understanding is important for those involved in destination marketing – targeting specific events and attractions to the 'right' audience. As such, tourism markets (the consumers) are increasingly segmented into different categories to aid the marketing process. What this section has shown us is that, despite the structuring of taste and practices being rather complex and deeply contested, there is still a lot of interest (particularly from leisure, marketing and tourism agencies) in trying to understand peoples' lifestyles and practices, for reasons of commodification and commerce.

### ***3.3 Taste, Tourism and Marketing***

As is acknowledged in the guidance notes for the Dumfries and Galloway Challenge Fund, with regard to niche marketing (see Barr, 2006a), "Niche marketing refers to targeting particular subsets of people – rather than marketing a

walking festival to all of the people of Glasgow for example, niche marketing would target those individuals known to have an interest in walking for leisure. This may be via specific leisure magazines or via targeted mailings or other tactics" (2006a: 11). In this sense, people with an interest in walking would be the target audience for such a festival. Indeed, not everyone will be interested in a walking festival. However, what for me becomes more interesting is when these notions of niche marketing are not applied to individual events and festivals, but to entire places, through place branding and marketing. As Gotham (2002) emphasises, place marketing is targeted towards particular consumers and audiences, and through this, the images of place are transformed, in order to appeal to such individuals (see also Young *et al.*, 2006).

An example of market segmentation within tourism can be seen in relation to food tourism. Hall and Mitchell define food tourism as "visitations to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food-tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of a specialist food production region are the primary motivating factor for travel" (2005: 74). However, Hall and Mitchell acknowledge that this food tourism market is comprised of numerous segments – from visitors who are extremely motivated by the food experience; to individuals who seek a food experience as part of a range of other activities; to individuals who seek food experiences because it is 'something to do'; to visiting a restaurant or café because one has to eat. What Hall and Mitchell (2005) have identified are the multiple and varying motivations of individuals. In this sense, even within the field of food, not all individuals will be seeking the same experience; and the motivations for seeking that experience will also vary greatly. Even within food tourism, we can see from Hall and Mitchell's definition, this covers an array of activities – linked to food producers, festivals *and* restaurants.

This raises a number of interesting questions in relation to the development of place brands that seek to symbolically portray particular lifestyles and experiences (see Arvidsson, 2005). Therefore, one must be critical of what it is that the place brand actually seeks to promote – the experiences, the lifestyles, the values – and to whom, as these are likely to differ between individuals. It is therefore rather likely that the process of place branding will be imbued with various contestations around culture and practices, as individuals seek the brand to portray particular values and tastes – for potentially different audiences.

Similarly to Hall and Mitchell (2005), Yeoman and Greenwood (2006: 21-22) identify different types of people who would be more (or less) interested in a food experience. They categorise people into six categories:

1. *Gastro Tourists* – This group represents 4% (or £36m) of food expenditure. According to Yeoman and Greenwood “This is the ultimate food expert, travelling to destinations because of the cultural heritage of its food and drink or its association with a particular chef” (2006: 21). They like to consume high quality food and are quite adventurous. According to the authors, they are mainly middle class.
2. *The Foodie* – This group represents 6% (or £54m) of food expenditure. They are a “semi-dedicated food enthusiast who subscribes to the food channels, read food-related magazines and chooses destinations based upon culture and cuisine. The foodie is sophisticated in his food choice, well informed and interested in good quality, locally sourced and seasonal food and drink” (Yeoman and Greenwood, 2006: 21)
3. *Interested Purchaser* – This group represents 30% (or £230m) of expenditure. According to Yeoman and Greenwood, “this group believe that

food in general can contribute to the enjoyment of their holiday and they purchase and/or eat local foods when the opportunity arises. These tourists do not pre-plan and are often the most active purchasers of local foods. They go to local farmers' markets as an alternative to something else to do, such as visiting castles" (2006: 21).

4. *Un-reached* – This group represents 17% (or £153m) of expenditure. According to Yeoman and Greenwood, this group "believe that food and drink in general can contribute to their enjoyment on their holiday. They are happy to try local food if they come across it, but, at present, would not consciously go out of their way to do so" (2006: 22)
5. *Un-engaged* – This group represents 23% (or £207m) of expenditure. According to Yeoman and Greenwood "these people do not perceive food and drink as adding to the enjoyment of their holiday, but they are not completely negative towards sampling local food" (2006: 22)
6. *Laggards* – This group represents 20% (or £180m) of expenditure. According to Yeoman and Greenwood "they have no interest in local food and avoid unfamiliar cuisine" (2006: 22).

Indeed, such marketing categorisations are interesting. First, they clearly illustrate a perceived cultural hierarchy within food consumption and practice. In this sense, those who are not interested in food are referred to as 'laggards', whereas those who are perceived as the connoisseurs of fine food are referred to as 'gastro tourists'. These categories are clearly value laden, in that they portray those more interested in food as having sophisticated taste and expertise, whereas those less interested as slightly unadventurous. Indeed, by constructing categories such as these, values are being ascribed symbolically to various practices. As Douglas and Isherwood argue, lifestyles represent the "visible part of culture. They are arranged



in vistas and hierarchies that can give play to the full range of discrimination of which the human mind is capable" (1979: 66). Yeoman and Greenwood's research also provides an interesting point for illustration – especially as it is produced by/for Scotland's tourist agency – in that tourist agencies, such as VisitScotland, work with such typologies, and implement various marketing strategies that are likely to reflect such values. This has the potential to construct consumers in particular ways, as the marketing (or branding) symbolically communicates such practices as being 'cultured' and potentially superior – in order to promote and sell tourist destinations and experiences.

In addition, whilst it is obviously problematic in terms of categorising people, based on an individuals perceived consumption habits, Yeoman and Greenwood's categorisation does allude to different motivations with regard to people's tastes and experiences related to food. This raises the question around the types of experiences that are promoted by and through the place brands in this research, as if one seeks to provide an experience for the 'foodies' and the 'gastro tourists', this potentially may not appeal to the more general market (and vice versa).

Similar observations were also noted in VisitScotland research focusing on golf (2006b). This research acknowledged that even within a niche tourism market, such as golf, there is a range of individuals with different motivations. There will be those seeking golf as the prime motivation; those who are more interested in the social side of the activity; those interested in the holistic experience (e.g. golf, spa and relaxation); to golf as one part of a range of different activities (VisitScotland, 2006b). Of course, these categories are most likely not exhaustive, but what these pieces of research highlight, is that even within niche tourism markets (such as food or golf), there will be a range of individuals, seeking different experiences – to

varying degrees. By targeting only one type of individual, you potentially exclude a whole range of others. This then makes the niche market, which is already rather focused (compared to the broader population), even more limited. Of course, individuals who are not interested in the experiences being promoted are unlikely to be attracted to such destinations. On the other hand, those who are interested (those with particular taste formations and dispositions) potentially will be:

New forms of reception are going to mean that advertising has to be very specifically aimed at very focused markets. In the fast-food industry as much as in other forms of cultural production there has been a proliferation of smaller 'niche' markets generating a variety of forms of provision; all of which means that producers and advertisers are going to have to be considerably more sensitive in how they characterise the social groups that characterise markets (Chaney, 2002: 171)

The same must be considered in relation to the place brands in this research. These pieces of research therefore make me question who the intended audiences are and what type of food; art or books are being referred to (i.e. the experiences that the brands seek to symbolically portray). More broadly, this research encourages me to explore the different aspects of books and art and food, in relation to place branding – in recognition that motivations, taste formations and agendas will most likely differ between individuals. This therefore makes the process of place branding, a potentially problematic and conflicted one.

Associated with this aspect of place branding is current practice and thinking within tourism and destination management. As Greenwood and Yeoman acknowledge, in their study of adventure tourism, "current thinking in tourism [is] that the activity aspect is becoming more important within holidays than possibly the destinations" (2007: 5). According to this research, people are attracted to a

place because of the activities that it offers, as opposed to visiting the place or the region in its own right. This idea can equally be related to the development of place brands. In this sense, by using such an understanding, activities are potentially promoted to appeal to and attract people with particular interests, dispositions and tastes (i.e. food, art, books), rather than to the places in their own right. Linking this to our understandings of place, this shows the role and intersection of tourism agendas with issues of taste, which ultimately has an effect on place and how places are packaged and promoted.

However, we, of course, must not assume that all individuals will be attracted to particular places because of their association with particular activities or experiences. For example, in VisitScotland research on mountain biking and cycling, there was a distinction made between a leisure segment and a specialist segment, with different motivations (VisitScotland, 2005). The report claims, "Amongst the leisure segment, destination is the key driver and cycling as an activity assumes varying degrees of importance (dependent upon the sub-segment)... [whereas]... Amongst the specialist segment, cycling is a very important element of their holiday and likely to be the key driver" (VisitScotland, 2005: 2). This report can be linked with the current research, in the sense of acknowledging that people have different motivations for visiting places and seek different experiences. In this sense, marketing a destination purely towards one market (e.g. those with an interest in second-hand books) could potentially attract individuals who are explicitly looking for such an experience, but in the process, potentially makes the destination appear to be all about that one thing. In that sense, place brands are potentially geared towards individuals with specific tastes, which may therefore be rather exclusionary – as place is likely to be more than the

brand<sup>17</sup> implies. This potentially narrows the market appeal of the place, and limits the numbers of people that may be attracted to such places. Linking this to place branding, through cultural themes, it therefore makes me question whom the perceived audience is for such place marketing strategies.

However, with such complexity in taste formations and practices, this not only questions who the audiences would be for a food, artists' and book town branding – but also what aspects of food, art and book are of interest. For example, in relation to fishing, VisitScotland (2007a) identify distinctions within the fishing market (i.e. coarse angling; game; sea), with different audiences for each. What this research does is problematise leisure activities and their audiences by highlighting that there is not a single type of fisher, and that fishing is not a single activity – but there are different types of fishing (VisitScotland, 2007a). Acknowledging that food, art and books are themselves (like fishing) diverse fields, it is also important to understand what the brand is actually referring to – as, for example, different aspects of art are likely to appeal to different audiences with different taste formations and practices. However, throughout this process, we must also acknowledge that there is likely to be a struggle of views – as individuals seek to promote their own tastes (or think of them as 'better' than others). This therefore makes me not only question what the brands actually refer to (i.e. what art?) and whom the perceived audience is, but also the contestations and struggles that are likely to occur as the brands take shape in particular ways (as opposed to other ways).

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<sup>17</sup> For example, there is arguably more to a food town, than just food (similarly to art and books)

### 3.4 Place Brand as Site of Struggle<sup>18</sup>

Bourdieu (1984) not only allows us to think about the audiences of such place brands, but also, more importantly, the struggles that take place within their development. Bourdieu's notion of the field is useful in understanding this. According to Jenkins, "a field is, by definition, a 'field of struggles' in which agents' strategies are concerned with the preservation or improvement of their positions with respect to the defining capital of the field" (2002:85). It is a site of struggle and contestation, where individuals compete for dominance (Painter, 2000; Grenfell, 2004) and where conflicts take place over different values, views, 'cultures' and differences in habitus (Bourdieu, 1984). There are numerous fields, covering a wide array of areas (e.g. economics, education etc) (Painter, 2000; Jenkins, 2002). Although each field is independent, it is also related to other fields and ones habitus transcends these boundaries (Painter, 2000; Jenkins, 2002). Thus, fields are "networks" and "configurations" (Grenfell, 2004:27; Bourdieu, 1993; 1980; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:97) – relational entities (Painter, 2000:244). Bennett *et al.* (2009) also note that fields are homologous – whereby, patterns are noted between one field (e.g. the literary field) and another (e.g. artistic field). They argue that those who tend to like Impressionist painting tend to like Opera and French restaurants too (*ibid*).

Through Bourdieu's work – and the struggles that take place within fields – we are encouraged to acknowledge the multifaceted nature of fields. For example, within the 'art' field, there are many different aspects (such as Impressionist art; sculpture; performance art). According to Bourdieu, different aspects would be more appealing to individuals with particular tastes than others. Indeed, individuals

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<sup>18</sup> I do not mean the term 'struggle' to imply explicit, overt and harsh conflicts, but instead subtle contestations and strategies for the improvement of one's position (e.g. values)

relate to (and value) different aspects of the field in different ways, and seek to promote their own values as the legitimate culture (see Bourdieu, 1984). With such multifaceted nature of fields, we cannot assume that fields are homogeneous, or indeed are subject to the same contestations and struggles (see Cloke *et al.*, 1995). What may be seen to have symbolic legitimacy and value in the field of art will be different to other fields (Cloke *et al.*, 1995), and will depend on those involved in the field.

Just as ones habitus may change and evolve, fields also change over time (Grenfell, 2004). According to Bourdieu (1993), the field is fluid – and highlight the different interests of different groups. It is argued that an individual's participation within a field is directly related to their dispositions and habitus (see Bourdieu, 1993; Devine and Savage, 2002). As such, fields are completely subject to the individuals who are interested in them, and can be transformed or modified as a result (see Devine and Savage, 2002).

This raises a number of interesting questions in relation to the development of place branding. First, it acknowledges that fields are sites of contestation, and that within and between fields, there will be conflicts over different values and differences in taste. Therefore, within the 'artistic' field, there will be various struggles over different types of art – all competing for dominance and recognition. The same could be said for the field of literature and food. Therefore, within the development of place brands (particularly around food, art and books – the focus for this research), it is important to note what 'type' of food, art and books are being promoted, and as such, what contestations and conflicts this process evokes. However, this also raises the issue that those who do not share such tastes (those relate differently to the field), will potentially seek to transform the

field (the brand) in alternative ways. There will potentially be a struggle of visions and practices. This notion of the field will be useful in exploring the various struggles and contestations that are likely to exist within the development of place brands, around cultural themes. However, before we even get to this stage in place branding, we must question how such brands (around food, art and books) arose in the first place. As previously discussed, food, art and books may potentially appeal to individuals with particular tastes and interests. As such, it is important to understand how those particular brands arose over other themes – which may have appealed to different audiences.

As also noted, even though fields are independent, fields are also relational, as one's habitus transcends field boundaries (Painter, 2000; Jenkins, 2002). As Bennett *et al.* (2009) note patterns between fields (such as a link between impressionist painting, opera and French food), this therefore makes me question the linkages between the place brands used in the three towns, with the assumption that food, art and books potentially have a cultural synergy, which promoted together, appeal to the same type of audience. This therefore encourages me to not only explore the three place brands independent of each other, but also as a collaborative marketing campaign (i.e. Glorious Galloway: F.A.B).

### ***3.5 Struggle for Legitimacy Within Place Branding***

As one can imagine, when there are numerous 'tastes', there is the potential for conflict, disagreement and the assumption that some tastes are 'better' or more 'legitimate' than others (especially as they are assumed to be a marker of social status!). Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) argue that legitimate culture is not a universal disposition, but is specifically related to the tastes of the bourgeois,

which is developed through socialisation in a particular social condition. This culture is valued most highly and is imposed on others. Within this process, the imposition of values, practices and ideas onto individuals is termed a process of symbolic violence (Painter, 2000).

It is argued that this imposition of values, ideas and practices is carried out in such a way as to make it appear legitimate (Jenkins, 2002). Bourdieu notes how symbolic action is often used within this process, whereby norms and needs are established and imposed, allowing certain material or cultural goods, or lifestyles to be 'sold' to potential consumers (1984: 345). Through this symbolic communication, meaning is attached to various tastes and practices, which forms a hierarchy of taste. Through such a symbolic mechanism, consumers are thus produced (Bourdieu, 1984), which then continues to reproduce the condition in a particular way, as meaning is attached to practices and tastes implying notions of superiority (distinction) and inferiority. For instance, as Opera gains legitimacy as a cultural practice, it is constructed to portray notions of sophisticated taste and distinction (see Weber, 1975; Chaney, 1996). Consumers want to appear cultured, so acquire association with Opera or such like, which then produces a demand for it. This situation then continually reproduces consumption and production (see Bourdieu, 1984). Therefore, Bourdieu argues that the production of goods and the production of taste are mutually constituted (1984: 230). Those who do not have a taste for such practices, as a result of symbolic violence, appear uncultured (see Bourdieu, 1984). According to Jenkins (2002: 104), this process disguises the various power relations at play and enables the conditions to be reproduced in a way that appears legitimate. Through subtle and often unacknowledged processes (e.g. through implicit marketing; symbolic communication), this is then continually



reproduced, ensuring that the situation becomes accepted as legitimate (Jenkins, 2002).

However, within this process, there is likely to be a range of struggles by other actors seeking to challenge such values and promote their own perspectives. Bourdieu (1984) argues that the reason for this struggle is due to differences in habitus. Thus, there is a struggle for legitimacy and dominance related to particular values and dispositions. As Jenkins notes, "Culture and the institutions of cultural production, categorisation and registration (legitimation), are things *with* which people fight, *about* which they fight, and the ground *over* which they fight" (2002:120). Whilst this quote is useful in examining the struggle for legitimacy, the term 'fight' arguably implies an explicit and overt confrontation. However, in practice, it can be much more nuanced and subtle. Rather than explicit confrontation, the struggle could be seen through more symbolic forms. As Wynne (1998) discusses in relation to leisure and sporting facilities on a new housing estate, there were struggles over how those facilities should be used – which activities were deemed appropriate – and also struggles regarding the relations between those who used the facilities and those who did not. Whilst there were no explicit confrontations, there was an implicit meaning structure that was created, about how the space was used, and by whom. The form that struggles take vary between cases and contexts, as the agents in the field (i.e. the individuals) will relate differently to the field and the 'legitimate' culture (see Cloke *et al.*, 1995) and will employ various implicit strategies.

Through this understanding of struggle, there is no such thing as 'the' culture, but a culture that is more or less dominant at a particular time (Jenkins, 2002:xv), and which gains position through subtle strategies. In this sense, the 'legitimate culture'

is also contingent on the relations in the field. Thus, the issue of power becomes prevalent (ibid). As Murdoch and Marsden (1991) argue, although there is not a single culture associated with the middle classes, in rural Buckinghamshire they found that the cultures associated with them were becoming hegemonic. Such a situation does not imply explicit power games by the middle classes to dominate the countryside, but much more implicit, subtle strategies, which are done in such a way that they appear legitimate, and indeed, often unacknowledged. This acknowledges the issue of power, and indeed how power can be enforced and demonstrated in cultural terms (see Allen, 2003). However, such implicit conflicts and struggles regarding different values of culture not only occur between classes, but within them, as the dominant class struggle to constitute what culture should be legitimate (Lane, 2000; Bourdieu, 1984):

For Bourdieu all societies are characterised by a struggle between groups and/or classes and class fractions to maximise their interests in order to ensure their reproduction. The social formation is seen as a hierarchically organized series of fields within which human agents are engaged in specific struggles to maximise their control over the social resources specific to that field, the intellectual field, the educational field, the economic field etc. and within which the position of a social agent is relational, that is to say a shifting position determined by the totality of the lines of force specific to that field (Garnham and Williams, 1980:215)

What this illustrates is a struggle whereby individuals (with particular dispositions and tastes) seek to promote their own values over others, in order to gain a better position in a cultural hierarchy. Through making one's own culture legitimate, one is discrediting other cultures (Savage *et al.*, 1992). Thus, Bourdieu is not solely interested in tastes, but in how those tastes become dominant – the various struggles and contestations that such a process evoke (Jenkins, 2002: 129).

However, the struggle for legitimate culture that Bourdieu identified was not entirely supported by Bennett *et al.* (2009). They did not find a strong sense of superiority from those who were culturally engaged, although they did find that those who were not engaged did feel looked down upon – they felt slightly inferior, for not participating in (and not wishing to participate in) more 'legitimate' forms of culture (ibid). Jenkins (2002) also notes that people will relate to legitimate culture differently, as their relation is linked with their habitus and dispositions:

While the social lives of those with fewer qualifications and working-class occupations have little place for the niceties of legitimate culture, they are mostly not socially excluded; they mostly have vibrant social lives, and their apparent differences from those of higher social standing appear predominantly related to the different roles of family, kin, and friends and the organisation of leisure and sociability in the home and the local community (Bennett *et al.*, 2009:71)

Thus, the working classes do not necessarily aspire to legitimate forms of culture (which Bourdieu believed). They are not necessarily excluded - but disinterested (Bennett *et al.*, 2009). Many of their preferred activities are also more home-centred, or related to popular and commercial culture, as opposed to legitimate culture (ibid: 204). Ultimately, Bennett *et al.* (2009) did not find any form of imposition of culture and superiority from the middle-classes, or for any sense of 'in-completeness' on the part of the working-class, which somewhat questions the importance of legitimate culture in structuring society. I do think the struggle for legitimate culture is still applicable however.

Despite Bennett *et al.* (2009) acknowledging that the divide between legitimate and popular culture is a fractured one, with people (particularly the middle classes)

increasingly having a taste for and participating in both, they recognise that some aspects of culture still remain fairly legitimate or highbrow. For example, within their research they found that not many people read or own many books (apart from a few popular texts e.g. Harry Potter). However, when they extend 'reading' to cover all reading forms (e.g. magazines / newspapers), they found that nearly everyone reads something. Thus, they suggest that reading books has a legitimate air about it; it has connections with formal education, and the cultivation of literacy and the acquisition of cultural capital (2009:95). This supports conclusions by Griswold *et al.* (2005) that there exists a 'reading class', which is marked by voracious participation and a high level of education (Bennett *et al.*, 2009). Even if the struggle for legitimate culture is of less prominence in the UK now, compared to France during the 1960s, Bennett *et al.* (2009) do identify some class hostility in relation to tastes. They assert that "taste is a means of identifying social groups, and is clearly associated with a sense of social hierarchy, of superiority and inferiority" (2009:210). They identify this sense of 'us' and 'them' from the working class – particularly related to snobbery and cultural practice. Whether we call this a 'struggle for legitimate culture' or not, it definitely alludes to a conflict of interests, and a struggle over cultural practice. In this sense, legitimate culture may have changed shaped slightly, but it is still present.

However, Bourdieu's work has been criticised regarding the extent to which it reduces the complexity of culture and practice, suggesting that culture (and cultural practices) are just a way of achieving symbolic advantage and distinction (see Cloke *et al.*, 1995). Whilst Cloke *et al.* (1995) assert that, to an extent, that is the case, they argue that that is not the entire picture – culture is much more complex than just a struggle for position and class dominance. Indeed, such class struggles through culture may be less evident today, than in the past. As Chaney

(2002: 168) notes, from the early nineteenth century, urban popular culture emerged as part of the stratification of a class society – identifying clearly working class leisure activities. It was inherently bound with conflicts and resistance of class struggles. This remained the dominant case until the middle of the twentieth century (Chaney, 2002). Mass culture and commercial culture popularised culture even further – although the culture inevitably retained class associations. However, since this period, Chaney argues that there is what he terms ‘fragmented culture’, which “lack defining characteristics in any of three aspects of production, narrative and participation” (Chaney, 2002: 170). He continues, “the sphere of culture is becoming harder to mark off as a distinct ‘space’; and second, that the diffusion of culture into the general range of social activities can be characterised as a process of fragmentation” (Chaney, 2002: 170).

Throughout much of the twentieth Century, Chaney (2002: 173) notes how art retained its position as an important ‘capital’ controlled by elites. However, Chaney argues, “the boundaries marking off and sustaining elite or high culture are increasingly being undermined and destabilised” (2002: 173). Chaney asserts that popular and mass culture is now becoming dominant. He notes that there is no longer a clear-cut distinction between classical music and popular music. Thus, the authority and legitimacy of high culture has been undermined (Chaney, 2002: 174). Nevertheless, culture is seen to be of unquestioned good, and investment is made in it:

Although I do think that much of the authority of culture as an enclave of critical insight has been lost... culture as a source of prestige for corporations and national bodies seems an unquestioned (or unquestionable) good. This is indicated by an enormous investment (not least through the subvention of lottery revenues) in the institutions of public

culture, such as galleries, museums, theatres and production companies etc, which have bolstered the status of high culture as a national resource as never before. The use of culture as a form of capital, for organisations, groups and individuals, has also undoubtedly underlain the development of cultural tourism and the sorts of participation that offers (Chaney, 2002: 175)

However, as Chaney (2002) notes, culture – although still very important in modernity – is becoming increasingly fragmented, and that the authority of culture is “increasingly dissipated and discredited” (2002: 5). This questions who has the power to make particular cultures more legitimate than others. Legitimacy is thus questioned. Despite the extent to which the struggle for a legitimate culture is questioned, I argue that the concept is a useful one in allowing us to examine the struggles involved within place branding. I am therefore not engaging with Bourdieu’s concept in the literal sense (whereby individuals from a particular class are engaging with ‘high’ culture as the legitimate culture), but in a rather different way. With increasingly fragmented understandings of ‘legitimate culture’ (i.e. popularisation etc), I would argue that there is not a single legitimate culture. Indeed, if the struggle within the field is related specifically to the agents involved, I am therefore seeking to apply Bourdieu’s concepts at a much smaller scale (i.e. small rural place developments). I am therefore interested to see whether individuals seek to promote particular values and practices within the establishment and maintenance of the place brands. As Bourdieu argues:

The object of social science is a reality that encompasses all the individual and collective struggles aimed at conserving or transforming reality, in particular those that seek to impose the legitimate definition of reality, whose specifically symbolic efficacy can help to conserve or subvert the established order, that is to say, reality (Bourdieu, 1990:141)

I am therefore engaging with the concept of 'legitimate culture' to refer to the culture of the place brand that appears to be most dominant at any single time (as defined by the individuals within the field). This is, of course, likely to change as individuals transform the field of the brand in different ways, thereby seeking to make another aspect, the legitimate culture of the brand. As Bourdieu (1996; 1992) asserts, by imposing a new taste formation, a new value, new meaning or condition, other conditions, values and tastes are all relegated, as the new conditions gain dominance:

This means that changes in posts (and their occupants) are inevitably accompanied by a whole effort at symbolic restructuring aimed at winning recognition in representations and therefore by a permanent struggle between those who seek to impose the new system of classification and those who defend the old system. Taste is at the heart of these symbolic struggles, which go on at all times between the fractions of the dominant class and which would be less absolute, less total, if they were not based on the primary belief which binds each agent to his life-style (Bourdieu, 1984:310)

The different notions of taste and lifestyle are then being used (and struggled over) within the branding process, in order to portray the place brand in a particular way (and promote particular values and experiences – see Arvidsson, 2005). As Chaney (1996) argues, cultural practices and tastes are imbued with symbolic meanings (Chaney, 1996). Consumption is therefore a symbolic marker of social status and lifestyles have symbolic meanings. As such, there are various values ascribed to different lifestyles (ibid). Such values and lifestyles can also be associated with places. As Morgan *et al.* (2004: 4) acknowledge, an individual's choice of holiday destination "is a significant lifestyle indicator". They continue, "as style symbols, destinations can offer similar consumer benefits to highly branded

lifestyle items" (ibid). These communicate messages about people's lifestyles, their identity, and their status (ibid). Similarly, as Urry notes, "there are clearly many holiday destinations which are consumed not because they are intrinsically superior but because they convey taste or superior status" (1990: 44).

Indeed, through branding, it is argued that products gain particular meanings, values and associations with particular lifestyles and experiences (see Arvidsson, 2005). For example, the Starbucks coffee brand is as indicative of urban culture, as a place to drink coffee. The brand is therefore a symbolic mechanism of communication (see Arvidsson, 2005). Thus, the brands (and the consumption of the brands) communicate messages about one's lifestyle and taste (see Comb and Crowther, 2000). Place brands also have the potential to portray particular experiences and lifestyles – for individuals with particular tastes and dispositions. However, of course, it is widely accepted that place means different things to different people (see Murdoch *et al.*, 2003) and individuals also have different lifestyles (see Chaney, 1996). Therefore, in recognition of this complexity, the application of a brand to a place is likely to be much more contested than a product brand (see Kotler, 2004).

The place brand thus becomes the field – a site of struggle – where individuals involved in the field seek to transform it, or conserve it in particular ways (dependent on their own values and tastes). This process can be interpreted through the struggle for legitimate culture, as individuals seek to make their own culture, the dominant and legitimate culture of the place brand. It may not therefore be associated with a struggle for class position, but at a small scale, a struggle between different interest groups and individuals, seeking to transform the brand, and the place in particular ways.



### **3.6 Transforming Social Conditions: Place Branding**

Within Bourdieu's work, there is a lot of focus on how habitus is developed through time, in accordance with the social conditions in which they are situated (Jenkins, 2002) – although much of this focus has been on class, at the expense of age, gender and ethnicity (Bennett *et al.*, 2009). Bourdieu also acknowledges how habitus disposes individuals to have certain tastes, or to have particular interests and lifestyles (Jenkins, 2002). But, what I feel that he somewhat neglects is the way in which certain individuals seek to transform social conditions (e.g. in different places). As Blokland and Savage argue “agents mould spaces into places meaningful for their social identifications” (2001:224). Similarly, Cloke and Thrift (1987) argue that elements of the service class – with particular dispositions and habitus – create and transform spaces and places in particular ways, in tune with their own tastes and interests. This is achieved through a struggle for legitimacy (Halfacree, 1992).

Arguably, it does not necessarily need to be transformed *by* individuals with particular dispositions, but transformed *for* them (see Urry, 1995a). As such a process occurs, that social condition is continually reproduced, and is then reproduced in slightly different ways, as others seek to further transformations. Relating this to the process of place branding, arguably the places are branded, in order to appeal to individuals with particular tastes – acknowledging of course, that this is a contested and conflicted process surrounded by various struggles, which will gain dominance to varying degrees. Through this process, the places (if branding gains dominance) are then continually reconstructed and repackaged around the brand (through further promotion; staging of events; attracting

investment etc), which continually reproduces the place brand and the social condition. As other visions gain dominance, alternative directions and developments will be adopted. This therefore highlights the intersection between place branding (through entrepreneurial strategies of governance), taste and the place itself – highlighting that the development of place brands are extremely complex social and economic processes, intertwined with place and taste.

In a similar way, Bridge (2006: 1967) relates Bourdieu's work to the process of gentrification in inner-urban areas and argues that the process of gentrification could be interpreted as an act of 'symbolic violence' over the working-class residents of the city. In this sense, gentrifiers moving in and creating places around their own lifestyles etc. Butler (2007) views this process as 'class clustering' – where individuals from sections of the middle classes choose to live close by similar others, which then displaces those who do not 'fit'. Therefore, with these ideas of 'class clustering' and people wishing to live near other people in the same class (presumably with the same kinds of taste and dispositions according to Bourdieu), it makes me question whether the place brands encourage individuals with similar dispositions to relocate to the place<sup>19</sup>. It also makes me question whether other related businesses are attracted to invest in the place, thus further transforming the social condition. However, as Bridge's (2006) research clearly illustrates, one cannot assume that all 'gentrifiers' are a homogeneous group – they will have different motivations, priorities and interests (even within the same household) (Bridge, 2006). Indeed, not all people who will visit (or relocate to) Wigtown, Kirkcudbright and Castle Douglas, will do so for books, art and food respectively. Also, residents in the places will have different interests and practices.

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<sup>19</sup> Not necessarily class-related, but lifestyle and taste related.

### 3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter draws on the work of Bourdieu and argues that this provides a useful theoretical tool for exploring and understanding the development of place brands through culture as entrepreneurial strategies of place management. This chapter begins to discuss the relationship between branders (and marketers), and also the actual audiences of specific activities. It therefore makes us think about the leisure practices (and tastes) of individuals, but also the role of other agencies in terms of developing a lifestyle product for consumers.

Through Bourdieu's notion of habitus, it could be argued that individuals are more disposed towards particular cultural practices, based on their class position. Indeed, other research has also shown how tastes (e.g. in food) and practices were also associated with one's position (see Warde, 1997). Indeed, it is widely argued that one's tastes can be viewed as a symbolic marker of social position (Bourdieu, 1984; Chaney, 1996), as is one's choice of holiday destination (see Morgan *et al.*, 2004; Urry, 1990). As taste can be seen to be a symbolic marker of one's position, this links with the notion of a brand as a tool of symbolic communication, which expresses various lifestyle connotations and experiences (see Arvidsson, 2005). However, it has also been argued that class is not unified – and as such, neither is taste (see Savage *et al.*, 1992). Thus, taste has become less differentiated between class positions (see Chaney, 2002). As brands are increasingly applied to places (see Kavaratzis, 2001), this therefore makes me question the types of connotations and experiences that are sought to be promoted through the place brand, and indeed, whom such marketing is targeted towards (see Gotham, 2002). Indeed, it is important to explore the place brands and critically examine whom the perceived target audiences are.

However, with acknowledgement that individuals have different taste formations, and that cultural fields (e.g. food, art, books) are diverse, we must also explore what the actual place brands refer to. This recognises that within the field of art (like food and books), there will be different aspects that will be more appealing to some individuals than others (e.g. sculpture versus landscape paintings etc). Through such diversity within the cultural fields (and also recognition of the contested nature of place), the process of establishing a place brand is likely to be a contested one, with struggles not only over the meaning of the brand (what it represents; the experiences it promotes etc), but also the meaning of the place more broadly.

Through this process of struggle, some visions will potentially gain more dominance than others and will establish the legitimate culture of the place brand (and the place). As it gains dominance, the places are then potentially continually reconstructed and repackaged around the brand (through further promotion; staging of events; attracting investment etc), which further reproduces the place brand and the social condition. Through the struggle for legitimacy, the field can be transformed. In this sense, the place could potentially be transformed around the brand (i.e. become a Book Town), and the brand is also transformed, as individuals seek to promote alternative meanings and experiences through it. If the place brand becomes the legitimate culture of place, this further reproduces and reinforces that particular social condition (as people visit; new businesses open; people relocate).

However, it is likely that the place brand will continue to be a site of contestation, as the struggle between visions (tastes, practices) continues. If these alternative visions gain dominance, the brand can then be altered. There is thus a continual

struggle over the transformation (and/or conservation) of the place brand (i.e. the field). Thus, the place brand could be seen as the field over which the agents involved struggle to make their visions the legitimate culture. Certain individuals within the field thus wish to construct particular notions of the brand (to promote particular experiences, and be associated with certain lifestyle connotations for particular audiences), and other individuals will seek alternative meanings for the brand. Therefore, Bourdieu's notion of the struggle for legitimate culture is a useful concept in enabling us to examine such processes within place branding.

I am therefore engaging with Bourdieu's notion of the struggle for legitimate culture to enable me to explore how some individuals / groups seek to make particular meanings (experiences, symbolic connotations) of the place brand legitimate (potentially with particular target audiences in mind). It is not necessarily class-based (as Bourdieu would suggest). Nevertheless, it is still a social struggle, and Bourdieu helps me with this regard. Whether the struggle is fundamentally class based, is a matter of debate – as the importance of class within the structuring of taste and cultural practices is increasingly contested, and notions of class have become more fragmented (see Savage *et al.*, 1992).

It is therefore essential, with growing interest in place branding, to critically explore the processes involved in such entrepreneurial place developments. It is important to understand whom the perceived and target audiences are for such branding and marketing strategies; the actual meaning of the brand that is being promoted; and the various politics that such a process evokes. The theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu – particularly his notions of taste and the struggle for legitimate culture – will enable us to explore such processes. The next chapter addresses how the

research was undertaken and the reasons for such choices; before proceeding to subsequent chapters, which address the empirical findings.

## Chapter Four: Methodology and Research Context

This chapter explores the research process and the methodology that was used within this thesis. It discusses the methods that were used and the reasons for their selection, but also some of the challenges that undertaking the research evoked. Empirically this research adopted a multi-sited case study design exploring three places within Dumfries and Galloway (SW Scotland) – Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbright and Wigtown. Within each case study I used a range of qualitative methods, including: ethnography, semi-structured interviews and archival research. This will be discussed in the following sections.

The place brands in Dumfries and Galloway provided a good case study for a number of reasons. Because the towns are all situated within the same region, this reduced some of the effects of regional differences within the research. By focusing on three places (rather than a single place) and examining different types of theme (rather than purely Book Towns), this potentially enables the research to be more generalizable. As one of the limitations of case studies is the extent to which research can be generalised (Yin, 2003), this approach enables the similarities and differences between rural place developments within a region to be explored. Of course, it is important to acknowledge that some question whether any research can ever be truly generalizable (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). However, it is not the intention of this research to create some grand theory that can be generalised to *all* places – as I acknowledge the existence and importance of local contexts and regional differences – but I intend to use this regional case study in making a ‘theoretical inference’ (Hammersley and Gomm, 2000) about *rural* place brands more broadly. This kind of approach is very similar to Bourdieu’s work, which emphasises the links between theory and practice. He believes strongly in empirically informed theory, but also theoretically informed research (Jenkins,

2002). This current research seeks to adopt such a framework, ensuring that this piece is empirically and theoretically informed.

#### ***4.1 Methodology: The Rationale***

As acknowledged in chapter one, this research set out to address four research questions. It sought to examine how and why such place brands were developed (i.e. the actual development process); the audience for such place developments; the struggles and contestations within the branding process; and how place is reconstructed around the brand. Through such questions, it became apparent that I would need to explore the development trajectories in as much detail as possible. It became clear that to address this, I would need to review and use archival and documentary materials (such as newspaper articles; meeting minutes; development reports). It was envisaged that this would give me a wealth of context to the place brand developments. However, I did not want to be over-reliant on documentary sources alone. In addition, I wanted to ascertain, from those that had been involved in the developments, the motivations behind adopting place brands. It therefore became apparent that I should use an interviewing technique, which would allow me to ask questions about the developments. As the research is rather exploratory in nature, a fully structured interview was not desirable, as I wanted to find out as much information as possible, and did not want to be restricted by a rigid interview schedule. However, simultaneously, I sought to address my research questions. It was therefore decided to adopt a semi-structured approach to interviewing. These two approaches would enable me to gather a wealth of qualitative data around the place brand developments, and would allow me to address my research questions. I could use the documentary sources and the interviews to understand how and why the brands developed; I could understand how the places have changed (by examining how the places



were); and I could understand who the intended audience were for the brands, through the interviews.

However, it was felt that I would better understand the struggles and contestations within the development process; and indeed, who the audiences are for such branding initiatives, by spending time in each place, speaking to a broad range of individuals (local residents, visitors, local businesses), attending events related to the place brands and attending initiative meetings. By immersing myself within the places, it was envisaged that I would be able to explore the complexities within each place; observe; experience; and ask questions. Through such a methodology, I would gain an in-depth perspective, which would be analysed in conjunction with the other methods. It would also enable me to explore the various contestations within the development process, through speaking to numerous individuals (in relatively informal contexts), attending meetings, and observing. Thus, I felt that I could gain a better understanding and reduce my over-reliance on what I am told by those directly involved (or what I read in documentary sources), by actually joining the places which I research (Rapport, 1993) – to carry out ethnography – in conjunction with these other methods.

Therefore, it became clear, when planning the methodology for this research that I needed to use a range of different methods, in order to comprehend and examine the cases in the detail and depth that is required. As such, it was decided to use a qualitative mixed-methods approach – including ethnography, semi-structured interviews and archival research. It was decided to use qualitative methods, as these provide more in-depth data than quantitative methods and enable examination in the amount of depth and detail necessary to fully understand the cases (Silverman, 1993; Elias and Scotson, 1994 [1965]; Blaxter *et al.*, 2006). As

Elias and Scotson argue “social data can be sociologically significant without having statistical significance” and vice versa (1994: 11). Gillham also acknowledged, “questionnaires are of little use if meaning and *understanding* are primary concerns” (2000: 78-79). This research sought to explore and examine the complexities associated with place branding, so an in-depth methodology was better suited.

By using a combination of methods, I have, in essence, been triangulating the data. This involves “apply[ing] several research methodologies in combination when studying the same phenomenon”, which “help[s] to overcome the weaknesses and the problems that come from single method, single observer, or single theory studies” (Gold and Revill, 2004: 40). It was anticipated that this approach would improve the validity and reliability of the research, as each method has different strengths and provides alternative material, perspectives and insights (Clifford and Valentine, 2003; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Thus, by triangulating the data, I have been able to explore a more holistic understanding of these places, the region and the developments than might have been achieved from just one single method. As well as using a range of methods in order to understand the phenomena more holistically, this research also draws on a number of disciplinary fields. As Harris *et al.* argue, “interdisciplinarity is central to answering geographical questions” (2009: 382). Buller (2009) uses the analogy of a sheep, which does not belong to any one discipline. He notes that the sheep can be interpreted in many different ways, from a number of different perspectives. It can be seen as an animal; as a farming mechanism; as a product; as a symbol of a nostalgic rural economy (Buller, 2009). As things are ‘relational’, we must therefore also adopt ‘relational’ thinking in terms of our research (Buller, 2009). As such, within this research, I am engaging with theories; literature and

methodologies from across Geography, Sociology, Urban Studies, Rural Studies, Tourism and Anthropology, in order to better comprehend the phenomena.

#### **4.2 Validity and Reliability**

By using a mixed methods approach and adopting an interdisciplinary perspective, the validity and reliability of this research is improved. Although interviews are extremely useful in accessing information, we cannot be solely reliant on this source, and we must go beyond the words (see Mackian, 2010). As Hammersley and Atkinson assert “we see no reason to deny (or for that matter to affirm) the validity of [interview] accounts on the grounds that they are subjective... such participant knowledge on the part of the people in a setting is an important resource... though its validity should certainly not be accepted at face value, any more than should that of information from other sources” (2007:98). A mixed methods approach, providing data from a variety of different sources, potentially overcomes such an issue. We must also be critical of what we are told, as there are often ‘official’ and ‘unofficial’ views (Newby, 1977), or indeed, particular narratives that individuals wish to communicate. As Elias and Scotson acknowledge “in communities... one could expect people in interviews with relative strangers to produce more readily the dominant standard ideas than any individually formed opinions which deviated from these standards” (1994:5; Neal and Walters, 2006). By undertaking ethnography and archival analysis in addition to interviews, it is anticipated that some of these issues will have been avoided through the triangulation of data.

Despite such attempts to improve the validity and reliability of this research (see Yin, 2003), we must also acknowledge the complex and ‘messy’ characteristics of research and reality (Law, 2004). In this sense, my writing is unlikely to capture all

of the complexity and the intricacies involved in the process (Clifford, 1988). As Blunt *et al.* note, “most pieces of published work... are presented as completed, neat and tidy arguments with all the loose ends tied away and all the evidence pointing in the same direction... On one side is an orderly, well-composed picture. On the other side is a tangle of threads” (Blunt *et al.*, 2003: 3). Thus, it should be noted that this research is based on my interpretation – as Gerring notes, “social science is, of necessity, an interpretive act” (2007:70). As Mackian argues, “The very act of constructing data is in itself an act of interpretation. We choose what to observe, what to record, what to render invisible” (2010: 360). I do not make any claims that this research represents ‘the true world’, as I recognise that truth is itself a construction and there can indeed be multiple truths, and multiple realities (Law, 2004). It is, therefore, my interpretation, which has been constructed in relation to my respondents and what I have read and experienced (*ibid*). What I create is a knowledge that is situated in a particular context, in a particular time, and from a particular standpoint (*ibid*). It is, thus, partial (Clifford, 1986). It is situated within an interpretivist epistemology, which Mackian notes, is the “the belief that we can only know the world through examining interpretations of it” (Mackian, 2010: 361).

#### **4.3 Methodology: The Process**

Through the ethnographic approach, it was decided that I would spend two months within each place (i.e. 6 months within the region). This provided a period of engagement and immersion, allowing me to explore the cases in detail, within the timeframe of a PhD. The fieldwork was undertaken in three separate phases (see figure 4.1), allowing me to digest and reflect upon what I had been finding in the field. This time also allowed me to organise the next phase of the research (e.g. arranging accommodation and interviews). The fieldwork phases also reflect the

events calendars of the three places – ensuring that I was present in the towns during festivals and events. These events included the Wigtown Book Festival, the Kirkcudbright Summer Art Exhibition, the Arts and Crafts Trail and the Castle Douglas Food Town Day.

Place	Fieldwork Dates
Wigtown Book Town	19 <sup>th</sup> September 2009 – 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2009
Castle Douglas Food Town	7 <sup>th</sup> March 2010 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> May 2010
Kirkcudbright Artists' Town	6 <sup>th</sup> June 2010 – 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2010

*Figure 4.1: Fieldwork phases*

However, finding accommodation for a two-month period in small rural towns is no easy endeavour, when you are not looking to stay in tourist accommodation. As there were no spare rooms advertised on the Internet, and I had few contacts in the towns during the early stages of the research, I resorted to placing accommodation posters (see figure 4.2) in various locations.

**WANTED**  
**SPARE ROOM**

**2 MONTHS**  
(7<sup>th</sup> March 2010 – 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2010)



**Andrew Fordham**  
**07882 332960**  
**a.i.fordham@open.ac.uk**

I am a PhD researcher at The Open University and looking for accommodation in Castle Douglas for 2 months (7<sup>th</sup> March – 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2010) whilst I undertake fieldwork. I am a non-smoking, mature, responsible, clean and hard-working individual seeking a spare room. Rent is negotiable. Please contact me on the above details if you can help!!! Thanks ☺

*Figure 4.2: The accommodation poster that was used in my accommodation quest in Wigtown and Castle Douglas.*

Within Wigtown, posters were sent to two local churches, the local library and the Post Office during August 2009 – approximately six weeks before commencing fieldwork. I was also assisted by one of my research contacts by spreading word of mouth. In total, seven people contacted me offering accommodation in Wigtown. I accepted the first offer. Regarding Castle Douglas accommodation, I repeated the procedure adopted in Wigtown. However, in addition, my landlady in

Wigtown distributed posters for me amongst an array of businesses in Castle Douglas. I had a similar response rate to that experienced in Wigtown, which secured my accommodation in both Castle Douglas and also in Kirkcudbright<sup>20</sup>.

#### **4.4 Ethnography**

During each phase of the fieldwork, I participated in as many community groups (youth groups; social groups; sports groups), festivals (Wigtown Book Festival; Castle Douglas Food Town Day; Kirkcudbright Summer Festivities), events and meetings (community council; chamber of commerce; place brand committee meetings) as possible – talking to as many people as possible – without sacrificing the quality of data that I received, or the time needed to record, reflect and write regularly (see Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Appendix One provides a list of the different groups, festivals, events, meetings and places attended. In addition to those places, I attended other places where people gather, including public houses and churches. I also visited individual businesses, and spoke to the owners, managers, staff and customers. This approach enabled me to understand a variety of perspectives, opinions and motivations from local people, local businesses and visitors, through a conversational, ethnographic approach. The purpose for speaking to a range of people was to explore the place brands from a variety of perspectives, in order to ascertain opinions towards them. I was able to ask individuals about how long they had lived in the town (or what had encouraged them to visit or relocate); whether they were involved in the branding initiatives; what they thought of the place brands; and whether the places have changed since branding (see Appendix Two). By engaging in conversation and asking probing questions, I was able to address my research questions, and understand a variety of perspectives, which could then be examined in relation to the

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<sup>20</sup> I am extremely appreciative to all those who offered me accommodation, and obviously indebted to those whom I stayed with.

documentary sources and the interviews. I was able to understand how and why the place brands were developed; whom individuals felt the brands were for; the extent to which the places have changed; and the struggles and contestations over the brands. This approach thus contributed a variety of different perspectives on the development process. This approach also allowed me to understand whom I should be speaking to (as individuals often told me to go and speak to particular individuals).

As can be seen from Appendix One, during my first fieldwork phase, I attended a very broad range of groups. Whilst this was a relatively useful exercise in terms of getting myself known, on reflection during the phase after that fieldwork period, it had not provided any more of an insight than what I achieved through my other means (i.e. speaking to people in a range of different contexts). The experience was also a totally exhausting one (both physically and mentally). Therefore, in the future phases, I reduced the number of community groups that I physically joined and attended, as I was accessing the information I needed through those other informal sources. I therefore still managed to understand a broad range of perspectives and opinions, which was the purpose for the ethnographic approach.

Throughout the ethnography, I recorded what I had been told (and what I had observed) in a field-diary. I also recorded my initial thoughts, reactions and reflections here (see Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). In addition to talking to people and asking them questions, I also observed the kinds of activities and practices that are engaged with and promoted (through the place brand initiatives, and within community groups). I was not only able to experience such places and the activities within them, but was also able to document them, through photographs and written accounts.



The field-diary was word processed on my laptop computer every evening and I made a concerted effort to allow time to record as much information as possible<sup>21</sup>. However, I did not solely write in the evenings. I constantly had my notebook and pen with me (in my rucksack), which I made notes in throughout the day. This acted as an aide-memoir for when I came to write-up the day's events that evening. This process allowed me to critically reflect upon my notes, my observations and my conversations on a daily basis. I undertook this approach, as I wanted to explore the complexity within place, in relation to the development of place brands. Thus, through conversations, I was able to better understand people's opinions, attitudes and feelings towards the place brands. By attending a range of activities, and speaking to a broad range of people, it was anticipated that I would get a relatively representative sample within these places – and thus, a broad selection of voices. Of course, I do not claim that this sample is completely representative, however, I argue that most methodologies can never provide *truly* representative samples.

By immersing myself within each place for two months – speaking to a range of people and attending a range of different activities and events – I was able to gain an in-depth understanding of the places and people's attitudes and opinions for that duration. Of course, my own position (where I view myself, where others view me) is important and will have affected what I found (Cloke, 1994; Clifford, 1986; Geertz, 1988; Probyn, 1996; Mormont, 1990; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Mac An Ghail, 1991). Social researchers are part of what they study (Walford, 1991) – they must be reflexive and acknowledge their position and values. As Gillham notes, a "naturalistic researcher is not a detached 'scientist', but a

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<sup>21</sup> The length of the field-diary varied in length from 90 A4 sides of typeface to 175 sides

participant observer who acknowledges (and looks out for) their role in what they discover” (Gillham, 2000:7). However, despite acknowledging my own role with the research process, Taylor argues, “the ethnographic researcher is said to obtain an insider’s view of society and so to understand other people’s own worldview, instead of taking the outsider’s perspective of the conventional scientist” (Taylor, 2002: 3). It is important to note that I do not claim that spending two months in a place allows me to fully obtain an ‘insiders view’. However, I do argue that spending a concentrated period of time in a place allowed me to explore a range of perspectives; to experience a range of events; and to begin to understand some of the complexities surrounding the places and the brands – something that I would have been unable to do without such a methodology. As Delyser *et al.* note “qualitative geographers have come to understand that it is through prolonged and empathetic interactions with members of a social group that researchers can develop insights into the patterned regularities and meaning structures that shape group, individual and place identities” (Delyser *et al.*, 2010: 7).

By spending time in each place, I was able to explore the diverse and diverging voices that exist (Jones, 1993; 1997; Cohen, 1982; 1986). As Cloke *et al.* note, informal interviewing may be useful at “understanding the position(s) adopted by one or more social groups [or individuals] on a particular place, practice or process...” (2004: 151). As Cloke *et al.* (2004) recognise, informal interviewing may be better at getting at certain information, and allow the researcher to give voice to those he or she is researching – something which is much more difficult in a questionnaire survey. Of course, this raises the issue of power, and who has the right to speak for others (Taylor, 2002; Gregory, 1994). Within my approach, I do not particularly aim to speak on behalf of or for the individuals whom I spoke to. I seek to incorporate their voice into the narrative of my research. Thus, ultimately, I

am trying to make this research as much their voice, as possible (Edensor, 1998; Cloke and Little, 1997). Of course, I recognise that, despite such intentions, I am ultimately in control of what gets written – and what does not (Cloke, 1994; Clifford, 1988).

However, I am not the only person who has an element of control. The gatekeepers to the information also have control (see Campbell *et al.*, 2006). This not only includes the individuals who I spoke to (in terms of what information they make known), but also those gatekeepers who potentially provide access to others. It is thus important to acknowledge the role of access and gatekeepers within my research. I was extremely fortunate that, in a number of cases, those who I was staying with (and other individuals) in the three towns secured my access to particular individuals and community groups. Through their own social networks, my presence in town became known. They introduced me to individuals and representatives of various groups and organisations. However, my own networking also secured access to different individuals and groups. Whilst gatekeepers provided initial access to some information, resources and people, it must also be acknowledged that over time, I acquired, what Campbell *et al.* (2006) refer to as the position of 'keymaster' – as the information gathered gave me a position of power. My relationship with such initial gatekeepers therefore evolved over time (*ibid*).

Through the ethnography and engagement with these individuals and groups, rapport between respondents and myself was also developed as I became better known and I participated within a variety of communities (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). My participation and presence reduced some of the 'strangeness' of the researcher that Elias and Scotson (1994 [1965]) and Neal and Walters

(2006) allude to. However, whilst I was part of what I studied, I was never *fully* part of it (I did not truly belong – I was a temporary visitor) – I was simultaneously inside and outside (see Clifford, 1988; Blaxter *et al.*, 2006; Rapport, 1993). Simmel's (1950 [1908]) notion of the stranger is useful here. Being a researcher from a different town (region and country) to where I researched also made me a stranger (Neal and Walters, 2006; Cloke, 1994). However, despite this, we all have certain biographies, backgrounds and prior experiences, which 'leak' into the research process, which we should draw on effectively, to make ourselves appear 'less strange' (Neal and Walters, 2006). Although I remained a stranger (to varying degrees), Neal and Walters (2006) suggests that this distance and detachment is useful, as it adds to the perceived objectivity of the researcher, allowing the stranger (researcher) to be treated as a confessional (Simmel, 1950 [1908]).

It was anticipated that by becoming more known, by participating and by developing rapport, I would be able to better access 'individually formed opinions' rather than 'the dominant standard'. I feel that this has been beneficial. As Mac An Ghaill notes "the establishing and maintaining of these relationships will largely determine the quality of the data collected" (1991:109). By participating in the life of the towns, I have become better known and I have made some good friends and contacts as a result of the research. I have been invited to parties and social occasions and have been kept up-to-date with ongoing developments in the towns. Of course, there is always a challenge within ethnography of 'going-native'. I therefore constantly reminded myself that I am a researcher and had to be critical of the information that I was gathering:

Qualitative geographers explore the rich tissue of social life in all its myriad and intricate forms, most often beginning from the ground up, working

towards broader, contextualised understandings. And because qualitative researchers must generally become deeply enmeshed with the people and places we study, we are invariably affected through our full array of senses, and are forced to reckon with the wide array of emotions we feel as humans – making it impossible to pretend we are either purely objective or detached from our data (Delyser *et al.*, 2010: 7)

As Hall (2009) notes with regard to ethnographic research, within ethnography we must maintain ongoing and reciprocal relationships. Whilst this opens new doors in our research (such as access), it can also create ethical challenges (Hall, 2009). Our responsibilities to our participants (e.g. trust, harm, confidentiality etc) still remain, even when we have left the field (Hall, 2009). Ethnographic research really draws on one's interpersonal skills, but it as an approach, also crosses the boundaries between life and work (Hall, 2009), which creates further challenges. Thus, ethnographic research is fraught with ethical dilemmas, which emerge from any number of possible situations (Hall, 2009). It is a process of negotiation (Hall, 2009).

#### **4.5 Documentary Analysis**

In addition to the ethnographic component of the fieldwork – and the challenges that it raises – archival analysis was also very important. As Elias and Scotson (1994 [1965]) argue, in order to understand a particular case, it is important to understand its historical context. Places and people have histories. Without understanding these, we lack the detail to understand why things are the way they are or how things came into being. These sources included 'local' data and materials, but also regional and national documents (including newspaper articles, council minutes, steering group minutes, policy documents, promotional material

etc<sup>22</sup>). As the developments were initiated several years ago (1996; 2000; 2002), this historical element proved difficult to research – such as getting access to past documents and meeting minutes.

As all of the place brand developments were driven by community organisations, many of the records relating to their development were either in private hands, no longer existed, or documents were not made in the first place. As such, access to such documents was rather difficult and opportunist. However, in Wigtown, I was particularly fortunate to be allowed access to a substantial amount of material related to the Book Town development, as kept by one of those involved in the development from the beginning (see figure 4.3).



*Figure 4.3: The 'Unofficial' Box of Book Town Archives*

In terms of the balance of documentary material, I was able to access much more material on the development of Wigtown Book Town, followed by the Artists' Town development. This material mainly comprised meeting minutes and development

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<sup>22</sup> These are a mixture of electronic documents (available on the Internet / through committee members), and hard copies (available in local libraries).

reports, although in the Book Town, a much broader selection of materials (e.g. photos, newspaper cuttings, personal correspondence) had been carefully collected and documented (figure 4.3), which was down to the motivation and organisation of an individual. It was much more difficult to access documentary materials relating to the Food Town development, and as such, this case provided much more limited resources.

As part of the ethnography, I sought access to documents and information regarding the developments of the place brands from a variety of sources. A number of these sources were officially recorded, and publicly available. However, most were not. Access to such material differed between the cases (as discussed) and I was reliant on the generosity and helpfulness of individuals. Some of the material that I was given access to was confidential in character, whilst others were past newspaper cuttings etc. In the majority of cases, individuals (particularly in the Book Town and Artists' Town) were more than happy to loan me information for me to read. However, on one occasion, I faced an explicit ethical dilemma. Where I faced ethical dilemmas with regard to reading unofficial records (especially personal correspondence etc) in all of the cases. In one case, the individual who lent me the materials expressed concern about what I may use or report from the documents. Through email correspondence, the individual commented:

I would like to emphasise that the information that we have provided be treated in the strictest confidence. Within the town there is a vociferous group who are 'anti-X' and 'anti-X-town'... As they say, 'no names, no packdrill'. Generalities only please, processes and procedures but no identification, not even initials of any individuals. It occurs to me that

perhaps one of us could see a draft of what you intend using? (Email correspondence from an informant)<sup>23</sup>.

This immediately illustrates how research is a process of negotiation, surrounded by ethical and moral dilemmas. Also, I have to be careful of what I use, regarding what I have been told. I have to acknowledge that individuals will be living in the places after I have left the field, and that my writing could potentially have repercussions for the individuals. I therefore have to negotiate what I write, in addition to negotiating my access to the information in the first place. As Moore asserts "it is important for geographers to carefully consider the effects of their research on the communities in which it is based, even when that research concerns events and behaviours of a historical nature" (2010: 268). She continues, "Good research methods and ethical practice in geography, whether historical or not, rely on sensitivity to the context in which the study will be conducted and careful thought and consideration about the effects of the information gathered" (2010: 268).

#### ***4.6 Semi-Structured Interviews***

In addition to the ethnographic component and the archival materials, semi-structured interviews also formed a large proportion of the data. These interviews were conducted with those directly involved in the developments (e.g. with those on the steering groups, festival and event organisers, tourism agencies, local councils and councillors, chambers of commerce)<sup>24</sup>, in order to understand how developments came about, and the motivations of those involved. It should be noted that, whilst many of the original people are still involved in developments (or

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<sup>23</sup> I did not use any of the information received from this source in the end, as it was not directly relevant to my study

<sup>24</sup> See Appendix Three



at least contactable), there are equally as many who have moved on (either to a new post; moved away from the area; no longer engaged with the developments). Whilst I managed to gain access to several such people (either by chance or by arrangement), there were many who I could not make contact with. It must be noted however, that access to such people was made easier through other contacts (or through those whom I stayed with) – emphasising the importance of local knowledge and connections. Similarly to the situation regarding access to documentary materials, I gained more assistance regarding access to individuals in the Book Town than in the Food Town. Possibly because of the size of Wigtown (being a much smaller place than Castle Douglas and Kirkcudbright), more people knew who had been involved in the development of the Book Town and could offer me information about how to contact them.

Through such gatekeepers, and through my own research<sup>25</sup>, a number of interviews took place. I interviewed a number of 'elites' – those in positions of power – because I felt that they were best positioned to answer specific research questions about the developments (see Rice, 2010). The ESRC acknowledge that elite interviews are "interviews with senior people who may be chosen for inclusion in a research study because of the public role they hold in their own right (eg Government Ministers), or because they represent views of their general position" (ESRC, 2011: 39). Of course, there is an issue of power here (see Rice, 2010), which acknowledges that power is relational (see Allen, 2003). In this sense, I had elements of power – being the researcher – but they also had power – being in positions of authority, and the holder of the information. Other interviews were conducted with those less directly involved in the place brand developments, but

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<sup>25</sup> For instance, when I came across an individual's name in the development archives, I attempted to make contact with them directly, or find out contact details from other sources. I therefore took a very active role in establishing who to speak to – rather than being purely directed by gatekeepers.

who were perceived to be rather influential in the community, the public sector and the private sector. In total, 67 semi-structured interviews were undertaken over the fieldwork period (see Appendix Three) and interviewees were identified through archival research, Internet searching and snowballing. Contact was made with respondents via email, letter or telephone and a time and location was selected based on their convenience and preference. Whilst many of these interviews were extremely fruitful (particularly with those who had been actively and directly involved in the development process), there were a number of interviews (with various committee members, councillors, public sector officials) that were less informative. This could reflect the individuals' level of engagement with the actual development process. It could also reflect the relative historical nature of my inquiry, by exploring how the developments originated several years ago. Thus, the role of time and memory could have affected the information that I was given. It is also worth noting that due to the role of a number of different organisations and individuals in development, it sometimes proved rather difficult to ascertain who did what, and when. The movement of individuals from one post to another (particularly in the public sector) also made it rather difficult to establish who the best informant would be, within these organisations (as they were either relatively new in post – therefore lacking much of the historical context – or had moved onto a new role).

It was decided to use semi-structured interviews, as it is argued that they are “the most important form of interviewing in case study research... [and] can be the richest single source of data” (Gillham, 2000:65). They also “yield rich insights into people’s biographies, experiences, opinions, values, aspirations, attitudes and feelings” (May, 2001:120). Interviews, whilst flexible, were guided by an interview schedule (see Appendix Four) – a list of ‘issues’ to be covered (Hammersley and

Atkinson, 2007:117). These issues included the *development trajectory* (how and why the developments emerged; their involvement in development; their motivations; the governance and aims of development); *place promotion* (type of image portrayed; what the brands represent / mean; the target audience); *the politics of development* (local opposition and conflicts; decision making processes); and *culture and lifestyle* (culture in rural development; type of culture; taste and distinction).

This structure ensured that my research questions were addressed, but also allowed the research project to remain relatively open – in the sense that I was able to explore interesting leads as and when they occurred (from within the interviews, but also through the documentary materials and the ethnography more broadly). This ensured that my approach was inductive and empirically grounded, yet also relatively focused. I was able to follow different leads as and when they emerged, through in-depth interactions, conversations and observations (see Cloke *et al.*, 2004). As Cloke *et al.* suggest “one of the key skills of interviewing is a sensitivity of listening to what is being said, linked with an innate flexibility to permit and encourage encounters with the unexpected” (Cloke *et al.*, 2004: 152). Thus, the approach adopted in this research was flexible and inductive and enabled my analysis to be shaped by the data and by my experiences within the field. Therefore, this approach is much more grounded within specific contexts and situations, and thus, the data is less influenced by my prior conceptions (compared to a survey, which is constructed before the fieldwork and is unalterable). However, I do recognise that all research approaches are value-laden and are affected by the researcher’s positionality (see Winchester, 2000; Pryke *et al.*, 2003; Haraway, 1991; Taylor, 2002; Clifford, 1986), but through such an approach, it is less deductive and rigid than other methods, such as a survey approach.

The interviews were also audio-recorded. This enabled the conversation to be transcribed, coded and interpreted (Valentine, 1997). When I started my fieldwork in Wigtown, I was so busy in the field, collecting information and interviewing informants that I did not manage to transcribe my interviews as I went along. This meant that I was left, post-fieldwork, with a backlog of interviews to transcribe. After that experience, I realised that I had to modify my fieldwork practice – not only because it was not practical to spend a number of weeks purely transcribing upon return from fieldwork, but also because transcribing in-situ encourages one to reflect upon the content of the interview. Thus, as a result of this experience, for the second and third phases of research, I ensured that I kept up-to-date with my transcriptions. This was highly beneficial, not only as it meant that upon return from fieldwork I could start managing and sorting my data for preliminary analysis, but also because it allowed me to think about and begin analysing the content of the interviews, whilst on fieldwork, allowing me to follow particular avenues of inquiry, and ask particular questions.

Upon return from the field, I began interpreting and analysing the transcripts and other materials. Although I have attended training for NVIVO software, which assists with the coding of data, it was decided to not use this in the actual data analysis. I preferred a more traditional approach, of really getting to grips with the data myself, and coding by hand. I did not apply a quantitative coding schedule, as I sought to really grapple with the meaning of the material that I had. As I read each transcript, I began analysing and interpreting the complexity and the different meanings. I created thematic sub-headings, which emerged as my interpretation from the data, and continually added data under the themes, which were continually modified and added to, as my analysis developed. This iterative

process allowed me to familiarise myself with each transcript and its content. As such, I have read each transcript in-depth, several times and have been able to understand what people have said, in relation to the wider context of the interview, which I feel would not be the case in computer-aided analysis.

#### ***4.7 Daily Itinerary***

Because the events calendar in each place (both for locals and visitors) was extremely diverse, each day was rather different to that which had come before. Different meetings, different venues, on different days, at different times. As such, the structure of my day was extremely varied. However, a typical working day consisted of me undertaking semi-structured interviews and archival work, in addition to speaking to local businesses. This usually took place between the hours of 10am and 5pm (in recognition that many of the businesses and libraries did not open until 10am at the earliest). Most of my interviews were arranged for after 10am in the morning, allowing time for me to travel to the interview venue (which may have been in a neighbouring town, or a town several miles away).

The structure of each day was therefore dependent on whether I had scheduled interview appointments with respondents. I undertook archival and documentary work in the public libraries and museums around these times. I also allocated time each day to speak to businesses in the town. These trips were not scheduled or arranged, but were opportunist, allowing me to speak to staff and customers in the businesses. Occasionally, when the manager / owner was not around, or the businesses were too busy, I arranged a convenient time to come back. This approach was very fruitful, by allowing me to speak to a range of individuals (business owners; staff; local residents; visitors). It also allowed me to develop rapport with staff, as I often frequented the businesses more than once (especially

as living in the places for several weeks meant that I needed to use many of the businesses for personal errands).

Whilst I occasionally had an interview scheduled during the evening, this did not happen very often, and was at the request and convenience of the interviewee. Therefore, during the evenings, I usually attended various community meetings and groups (such as Kirkcudbright Forum meetings; Chambers of Commerce meetings; Community Council meetings). I also attended various social functions, both as organised community events (such as Scottish Country Dancing), but also through personal networks that I had developed through the research (such as dinner parties and other functions). All of these engagements allowed me to ask questions, in a conversational style, to develop rapport with my respondents and also observe proceedings. This added much depth to my analysis, and allowed me to explore views, opinions and perspectives other than those formally documented in reports and minutes. I was also able to observe the dynamics within decision making processes (such as during Community Council meetings), allowing me to understand more fully, the processes involved in decision making.

After these evening engagements, I would return to my accommodation and write my research diary. During my Wigtown fieldwork phase, I was so busy, that I did not have additional time to commence the transcription of my interviews. On reflection, post-fieldwork, this was a significant error in my fieldwork practice, as on return from the field, I had to have an intensive period of transcription. This was not only extremely arduous, but I also felt that I could have benefited from the process of transcribing the interview, whilst actually being in the field. Transcription really encouraged me to process the information that I had been told, and to reflect upon it. Through the transcription process, I sought to ask further questions.

Therefore, it was decided that in phases two and three of the fieldwork, I would strive to transcribe my interviews, whilst in the field. Thus, during these phases, after finishing my daily and evening activities, and word-processing my research diary, dependent on the time, I would commence my transcription. I would also work on this in the mornings before going out (see Appendix Five).

At weekends, my fieldwork itinerary was rather different. During this time, I visited any festivals and events that were organised (such as the local producers market; the Arts and Crafts Trail etc). I was able to not only participate in, and observe the events, and experience them first-hand, but I was also able to speak to visitors, event-goers, and volunteers. I found out a variety of perspectives and opinions, in addition to making contacts with which I had further conversations (or an interview). I also attended church on a Sunday morning, allowing me to meet more people. On a Sunday after church, unless there were other events on, as the majority of businesses were closed, I used this opportunity to catch-up on any transcriptions I had to do. It also allowed me opportunity to reflect on what I had been doing over the preceding week, and my plans for the following week. This also allowed me to really reflect upon my research findings thus far.

With such a variety of activities, events, engagements and appointments, my daily itinerary varied immensely, as did my weekly itinerary. This not only changed within each place (i.e. every day was different from every other day, and every week different from every other week), but also between places, as each place had different social organisations and committee meetings. Despite such variation, a sample daily itinerary can be seen in Appendix Five and a weekly itinerary in Appendix Six.

#### **4.8 Research Ethics**

Within research, there are a number of ethical considerations to take into account, and potentially unforeseen ethical dilemmas and challenges to deal with. The following section will explore the specific ethical issues within this research, which were considered fully to ensure that the research was undertaken to an ethical standard. This occurred throughout the whole research process, from planning, to undertaking fieldwork, to writing up and dissemination. This was in recognition of my moral and ethical responsibility to my participants and society (Thrift, 2003; Hay, 2003). To assist me in undertaking ethically responsible research, the Framework for Research Ethics (FRE), published by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC, 2011) were adhered to. This identifies six key ethical principles that research must address (ESRC, 2011: 3), which will be discussed in relation to the current research:

1. Research should ensure integrity, quality and transparency.
2. Participants need to be informed about the purpose of the research (and their own involvement) and the possible uses of the research. Any risks also need to be made known.
3. The anonymity of respondents and confidentiality of information should be respected.
4. Participants should take part voluntarily.
5. Harm to participants should be avoided.
6. The independence of the research should be clear.

To ensure that my research addressed these key principles, the research was reviewed (and approved) by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) at The Open University (see HREC, 2011). The quality and integrity of the research has also been subject to critical assessment through regular supervisory meetings



with two experienced academics. This has ensured that my research is transparent and open to scrutiny.

To ensure that the research was fully transparent and that potential risks known (with no deception), all of the participants in this research were informed about the purpose of the research (as well as possible uses and potential risks). All participants in the interviews were given a participant information sheet (Appendix Seven) and asked to sign a consent form (Appendix Eight) after being given time to decide whether they wish to participate and ask any questions they may have. This sheet identified the purpose of the research, my contact details and their right to withdraw (or not participate). All participation in the research was on a purely voluntary basis, with no recompense or coercive incentive, and this was made explicit. My supervisors' details were also given and a complaints procedure was made known. This process was designed, in order to protect my participants and to ensure that they were fully informed about their rights and expectations.

However, in recognition that within ethnography, the data would not be collected through structured interviews, but through informal and flexible conversations and observations, I did not ask every individual to complete a consent form. This was in acknowledgement that written consent may not always be appropriate in the situation (see ESRC, 2011: 29). Despite this, I made the purpose of the research known and ensured that respondents had my contact details. Thus, I ensured that all of my participants were fully informed and were not deceived or harmed in any way. Throughout all of my research, I never had any intention of deceiving participants, thus I made the purpose of my research known. As such, all participants were aware of what my research was exploring, and I was more than happy to discuss it with my participants as and when they inquired. This not only

ensured that my participants were fully informed, but that my research was transparent.

Interviewees who completed the consent form were asked for permission to use their name (and/or their organisation name), but I only used these details if I felt that it was necessary and appropriate (i.e. for contextual reasons). As Dowling notes, “when dealing with significant public figures it is sometimes not possible or desirable to ensure anonymity” (2000:26). It is important to note, however, that waiving anonymity was not a condition of participation<sup>26</sup>. If a person’s identity (and position) need not be known, they were made anonymous, as that information was not required within the analysis. This also protected participants and encouraged them to say whatever they wanted about the place branding developments, without any fear of repercussions from the communities in which they live and work. This went some way in ensuring that my research was exploring the actual phenomenon, and a range of perspectives, rather than the responses that individuals may have felt that they should be telling.

Despite such anonymity, I did not intend on making the three towns anonymous, as by me alluding to their promotional brands (e.g. Book Town) one would have been able to make an informed guess as to which towns I had researched. In this sense, one could argue that the ethical approach within this research was a consequentialist (teleological) one, whereby the ethical decisions that were made were dependent on the context and on the consequences of specific decisions (May, 2001; Hay, 2003). It was essential that the type of brand adopted (e.g. Book Town) was not made anonymous, as this formed a major component of the

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<sup>26</sup> Due to the structure of the consent form (Appendix Eight), an individual could opt to remain anonymous, by not giving permission for me to use their name.

research, in the sense of exploring the struggles and contestations within each specific brand. It was also important for my research to compare and contrast the similarities and differences between the place developments. Thus, their individual circumstances, contexts and identities, needed to be known and examined.

It is important to acknowledge that any confidential information that my participants gave me or which I read in secondary sources was treated sensitively. This was in recognition of the potential harm that individuals (and the wider places) could experience, if sensitive and confidential material was used inappropriately. Any confidential information, or particular personal values and beliefs that may be the source of potential harm, discomfort or stress for individuals (or communities) were also treated sensitively, as they may provide risk to one's social-standing in the wider community, an individual's privacy or their position within occupational settings (ESRC, 2011: 26). The material was either made totally anonymous (with no possibility of being traced back to its source), or was not included in the analysis. The decision taken was dependent on the importance of the material to the analysis in addressing my research questions, and its possible implications and effects on any individuals, communities or places more broadly.

To ensure that confidential material was treated sensitively, and indeed, that all data was kept secure, a number of procedures were adhered to, in line with the Data Protection Act (1998) and the Framework for Research Ethics (ESRC, 2011: 22). Thus, any data and material that I had been given (or told) was not transferred to other sources, but kept solely by myself. The data and materials were kept secured in both electronic and hard copy format. Any hard copies of data were kept secured in a lockable filing cabinet, and electronic copies were kept secured on a secure network at The Open University. My participants were also informed

that the data would be destroyed after the purpose of this current research, and would not be used for any other purpose (except for any resulting publications from the current project).

The procedures discussed in this section ensured that any potential harm to my participants was reduced, by protecting the data and information that I had been given. It also ensured that all participants were fully informed about the purpose of the research, their role and their rights. Through reflection of the possible ethical challenges and acknowledgement of ethical considerations, this ensured that I produced ethical research, which also addressed the Framework for Research Ethics (ESRC, 2011).

#### ***4.9 Chapter Summary***

This chapter started by outlining and discussing the methodology used in this research. It described the various processes involved – from finding accommodation, to dealing with ethical dilemmas – and justified the current methodology, over other alternatives. In sum, the current research adopted a qualitative mixed-method ethnographic-type methodology in order to explore and understand, in-depth, the complexities surrounding place branding. It was argued that an over-reliance on a single method; or on other methods (such as a survey), would not have allowed me to examine the cases in the detail necessary. By using ethnography, semi-structured interviews and documentary sources, it is anticipated that the research has provided a more holistic picture than would have been achieved through a single-method study, which hopefully increases the reliability and validity of the research. However, of course, this chapter acknowledges that this research is based on my own interpretation, and the analyses cannot necessarily be generalised more widely. It offers a theoretical

insight into the development of place brands, from a particular position. The next chapter is the first empirical chapter, and using the data collected through the above methodology, it examines how and why the rural place brands were developed.

## **Chapter Five: How and Why do Rural Place Brands Develop?**

Over the past few decades, urban places have adopted more entrepreneurial styles of governance (see Harvey, 1989; Hall and Hubbard, 1998). Increasingly, this trend is occurring in rural contexts too (see Little, 2001). This chapter explores place branding as an entrepreneurial strategy of *rural* place governance. Before interrogating this phenomenon in a rural context, this chapter will outline the development trajectories of the three place brands that form the empirical basis of this research. It will outline how and why such developments took place, and will discuss the similarities and differences. This chapter will thus critically explore the development of place brands, as strategies of entrepreneurial place governance, in a rural context.

### **5.1 Wigtown Book Town**

As noted in chapter one, by the late 1980s and early 1990s, Wigtown was suffering economically (unemployment; a stagnant property market). A common discourse prevailed that the town needed regeneration. The Book Town was seen as a mechanism to create jobs; to increase property values; to generate economic benefits for other businesses; to stimulate the tourism sector; and attract over £2m of investment (see SWRC, 1997: 22). It was perceived to be a solution:

Wigtown was basically dying on its feet, and this was an opportunity to give it something that would give it a new impetus – going for Book Town status helped to create that interest (Economic Development Officer, D&G Council, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010)

During the early-mid 1990s, a sub-committee of the Wigtown Community Council was established to consider regeneration options. Around the same time, Machars Action – a community development organisation – was established to investigate

the regeneration of the whole Machars peninsula, where Wigtown is situated. I was informed that an employee of this organisation saw a newspaper article in the Glasgow Herald explaining the potential for Scotland to have a Book Town (see The Herald, 8<sup>th</sup> March 1996). This article drew upon research undertaken by Professor Tony Seaton from the University of Strathclyde (in collaboration with Scottish Enterprise) (see Seaton, 1999). The whole stimulus for the Scottish Book Town development came from the recognition of the successes of Book Towns throughout Europe (see Seaton 1996a/b; 1997a/b). According to the report, "the main conclusion... was that a Book Town might provide a major opportunity for economic development and be a flagship tourism and cultural development for a rural town in Scotland" (Seaton, 1997c: 2). The report argued, "the highest priority should be put upon making a Scotland Book Town a success so that Scotland can be part of what is fast becoming a major international rural cultural tourism network" (Seaton, 1997c: 1). The Book Town was thus clearly used to stimulate economic investment. According to the Development Plan Review, "The Book Town initiative is seen primarily as an economic development project and the reasons for its pursuit and implementation are to stimulate the economy" (SWRC, 1997: 2).

After reading the article, the individual circulated it amongst members of the Community Council, as she felt that Wigtown had huge potential. Wigtown already had an existing bookshop and a book dealer, and they were very much in support of the idea. After consultations with the existing book businesses, the Community Council and the Wigtown and Bladnoch Business Association (WBBA), a Book Town Working Group was established (see WBTWG, 1996). This group included a book dealer (and chair of business association); a former town provost; former publishing director; a local development officer; vice-chair of the business

association; officer of the Community Council (later became a local councillor); local councillor; film producer; and chair of the Community Council (WBTWG, 1996). The Community Council made contact with Professor Seaton and expressed interest in becoming the Scottish Book Town. Based on an opportunist moment of reading a newspaper article, the Wigtown Book Town concept was born and emerged as a community-led development driven forward by a small body of local individuals.

In response to the newspaper article, several towns contacted Professor Seaton expressing interest in becoming Scotland's Book Town. However, according to Seaton's report (1997c), Scotland could only accommodate one Book Town. An evaluation process was established to choose Scotland's Book Town from a shortlist of contenders. These included Wigtown, Dalmellington, Moffat, Gatehouse of Fleet, Dunblane and Strathaven (see Seaton, 1997c). Wigtown established the Book Town Committee (under the constituency of Machars Action) and worked on a written proposal to become Book Town (submitted February 1997). They also gave a presentation to a review panel. This panel included representatives from the Scottish Tourist Board (now VisitScotland), Scottish Enterprise, three Book Town founders (Hay-on-Wye, Wales; Redu, Belgium; Bredevoort, Holland) and Professor Seaton.

Based on research into existing Book Towns in Europe, Seaton devised a selection criterion – comprised of 17 'Critical Success Factors'. These quantitative scales were rated on a scale of 1 to 5, and the scores for each town were totalled. These included factors such as "scenic appeal of the town", "leadership", "economic importance of Book Town to region", "transformation scope" (to name a few), which were assessed out of 5. The selection was also based on more



qualitative approaches – such as listening to a presentation and speaking to various parties. In December 1996, a briefing letter was sent from Scottish Enterprise stating “it was recognised that no-one had the authority to designate a town as Scotland’s Book Town but it was hoped that the above exercise would go a long way towards identifying which town had the best prospects” (private letter dated 9<sup>th</sup> December 1996<sup>27</sup>).

The panel felt that Wigtown had the best location; the “greatest potential for quick development”, “the right scenic and cultural features both in and around the town” and “was small enough and compact enough to be capable of transformation into a Book Town” (Seaton, 1997c: 6). The leadership qualities and community enthusiasm were also noted, as were the abundance of available property and the existence of an established bookshop. From the quantitative component, Wigtown scored 67 (out of a maximum of 85), followed by Moffat (54), Dalmellington (52), Gatehouse of Fleet (51), Dunblane (49) and Strathaven (42) (Seaton, 1997c; Seaton, 1999). As a result of this process, Wigtown became Scotland’s Book Town. A letter from Scottish Enterprise to the Book Town Committee in May 1997 stated:

I am pleased to inform you that the panel which was set up to assess the proposals from the various towns has identified Wigtown as the town which is felt to have the best prospects of becoming a successful book town for Scotland. It has to be said that none of the towns met perfectly the criteria set out originally and no single town scored ahead of all the others on every criterion. Nonetheless, Wigtown did come through clearly when set against the criteria as a whole.... It is now very much over to your committee and

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<sup>27</sup> I was kindly given access to this letter within a private Book Town archive.

the people of Wigtown themselves to progress the Book Town project (private letter from Scottish Enterprise, 15<sup>th</sup> May 1997<sup>28</sup>)

As noted, despite being judged externally, the Book Town development has always been a community-led development – nominated by the community and delivered by the community. Secondly, the excerpt addresses that none of the towns met the Book Town criteria perfectly, but that it was perceived that Wigtown had the 'best prospects of becoming a successful Book Town'. It was felt by some that this competition added legitimacy to Wigtown's Book Town brand – as it had been 'awarded' the title.

After becoming Scotland's Book Town the committee set about attracting booksellers to the town and sought investment through the public sector – to make the Book Town a reality. The Wigtown Book Town Committee became the Book Town Company in 1997 (a company limited by guarantee – separate from Machars Action) and the Book Town was officially launched in 1998, after several book businesses had been attracted to the town, creating a critical mass of booksellers (see SRWC, 1997). The Book Town Company was responsible for running the Book Town as an entity and all of the associated activities and events, including the Book Town festival. This started off as a weekend event, but now spans 10 days. The Book Town Company was also responsible for marketing the town and attracting more investment, more booksellers and more visitors. It employed a development manager and an assistant.

The Book Town Company's mandate came to an end in 2007. Since then, the responsibility for promoting the Book Town and the businesses has been with the

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

newly formed Wigtown and District Chamber of Commerce. However, its remit is broader than the Book Town Company's, in that it covers all member businesses within the Wigtown and district area (not all of which are book-related or located in Wigtown). The annual Wigtown Book Festival is organised and managed by Wigtown Festival Company – with a paid festival director and a manager. Since becoming the Book Town, Wigtown has joined the International Organisation of Book Towns (IOB) – many of which were initially explored within Seaton's research. The Chamber of Commerce is a member of this organisation.

## **5.2 Kirkcudbright Artists' Town**

The Artists' Town brand emerged in a rather different way to the Book Town, and was not subject to any national competition. Despite such differences, a similar discourse emerged surrounding Kirkcudbright's need for regeneration (although to a lesser extent than Wigtown). As noted in chapter one, Kirkcudbright has a heritage as being an artist's colony. Despite this, some feel that Kirkcudbright has been somewhat overlooked as an artists' colony (Hudson, 2005a), and has avoided recognition (see Lubgren, 2001<sup>29</sup>). However, with the decline of the colony in the 1980s and economic decline of other industries (notably fishing and agriculture), a discourse emerged that the town needed regeneration:

In 1999, Kirkcudbright was dying on its feet. There was a great worry that everybody was leaving – nobody was coming in – there was nothing for people to do. The cafes weren't doing very well. The shops were shutting down. It looked tired... The Millennium was the catalyst to get something going (D&G Councillor, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010)

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<sup>29</sup> Lubgren (2001) examines rural artists' colonies in Europe (1870-1910), yet does not acknowledge the existence of Kirkcudbright.

In 1999, a local community organisation (Kirkcudbright Forum) was established “to improve the economic, social, physical and cultural development of Kirkcudbright for the benefit of its local community” (Kirkcudbright Forum, 2011). It was Kirkcudbright Forum, who branded the town ‘Artists’ Town’. This is a completely different brand development trajectory, compared to Wigtown, which emerged through a national competition. The Artists’ Town brand emerged as self-designation from the individuals driving the concept and very much based on the artists’ heritage associated with Kirkcudbright.

During the late 1990s, when the Artists’ Town concept emerged, Wigtown Book Town was very much still in its infancy, although it had already attracted a wealth of investment from both the public and private sectors (i.e. through individual bookshops opening). Kirkcudbright did not receive the same level of public sector investment as Wigtown – but significantly lower (see Appendix Nine). The money that was invested in Kirkcudbright contributed to the promotion of the town through the staging of events and exhibitions, whereas Wigtown also benefited from funding to physically regenerate the town:

There was not a huge amount of money invested in the town itself, but there was money invested in events, like the public art exhibitions, bringing people together (Economic Development Officer, D&G Council, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010)

Some argue that the early successes of Wigtown Book Town were fundamentally important in encouraging those involved in the Artists’ Town project to develop the brand, whilst others were adamant that Wigtown’s brand had nothing to do with the development of Kirkcudbright’s brand. Irrespective of the impact of the Book Town brand on Kirkcudbright’s plan, the Artists’ Town brand was developed:

The increased emphasis on the notion of theme towns as part of the economic regeneration of the rural economy of Dumfries and Galloway, led to Kirkcudbright becoming an obvious choice for the development initiative Kirkcudbright – Artists' Town (Hudson, 2005a: 49)

Prior to the development of the Artists' Town brand, there had been discussions amongst some individuals regarding an art gallery development. The idea was to develop an art gallery that would celebrate and promote the former artists' colony, but also attract visitors and investment (Yellow Book, 2005: 2). This group formed a constitution and adopted the name Kirkcudbright 2000, whose patron became Lord Macfarlane of Bearsden (Bourne, 2000) – an individual who is influential in the art world. To promote their ambitions, in the year 2000 the group organised and staged the 'Homecoming' exhibition, which celebrated the artists' associated with Kirkcudbright and attracted 15,000 visitors (Macleod, 2009). The group have continued to stage large exhibitions during an eight-week period over the summer, annually. The Yellow Book study in 2005 emphasised the importance of staging 'high profile exhibitions' of high quality, in order to market the town and attract visitors. The group have staged exhibitions from the Fleming Collection (2002); Monet and the Impressionists (2005); portraits from the Scottish National Portrait Gallery (2008); and the Glasgow Girls (2010) to name a few. The Kirkcudbright exhibitions are supported by, and in partnership with Dumfries and Galloway Council, which supplies £25,000 of funding per annum towards the exhibition.

According to a Leader Funding Application for the region's 'Beacon Events', it is noted, "The Kirkcudbright summer exhibitions are an integral part of the promotion of Kirkcudbright Artist's Town" (Leader Funding Application, 2007). Similarly, the Yellow Book study on Kirkcudbright Art Gallery claims that "Kirkcudbright would be

promoted as an attractive *whole place package*, based on the Artists' Town theme, and comprising cultural and other attractions, events and festivals, arts-based activities, food, accommodation and shopping" (Yellow Book, 2005: 18-19). The report continues, "The aim would be to establish a mutually beneficial relationship: the Kirkcudbright Art Gallery would be the anchor attraction for the Artists' Town, while the Artists' Town brand will stimulate additional visits to the gallery " (Yellow Book, 2005: 19). It is thus clear how the branding is being used to stimulate further investment and attract tourists. According to Kirkcudbright Community Council minutes (10<sup>th</sup> December 2008), the Kirkcudbright Art Gallery is estimated to bring an additional 60,000 – 70,000 visitors to the town each year, bringing an economic return of around £2m per annum (ibid).

However, it was emphasised that Kirkcudbright 2000 and Kirkcudbright Forum are two separate organisations, with different agendas – although arguably, the ambitions and work of each one assists and promotes the other:

The Kirkcudbright 2000 group remit is really to see the establishment of the Kirkcudbright Art Gallery – a permanent art gallery, so it is related to the Artists' Town branding, but they are in fact two separate bodies. Kirkcudbright Forum group is about the economic and social well-being of the whole town, but sees that the Artists' Town branding and heritage gives the town a unique selling point for tourism and economic development.... There is an important distinction there to make (Museums Curator, D&G Council, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2010)

In this regard, this is rather similar to the current governance of the Book Town, whereby the Book Town and the Book Festival are now managed, governed and promoted independent of each other. Although, of course it must be noted, that in the early days of the Book Town, there was one organisation that dealt with the

whole package. Interestingly, Kirkcudbright Artists' Town and the associated exhibitions do not have a development manager. It is entirely driven by volunteers. This is different to that regarding the development of the Book Town. In addition to Kirkcudbright 2000 and Kirkcudbright Forum, there are also other groups and individuals who promote the Artists' Town in various ways, such as through the Arts and Crafts Trail. This will be further explored in chapter seven.

In sum, it is clear how the Artists' Town brand is designed to stimulate investment and attract visitors – similarly to that of the Book Town. However, it is also rather apparent that the development of the Artists' Town occurred in a rather different way to that of the Book Town, with different levels of public sector support. Interestingly, in the early stages of the Book Town, both the brand and the festivals and events were all governed by the same organisation – with representatives from the community and business sectors. This was a different experience in the Artists' Town, whereas the exhibitions and the brand are organised by different groups, and there are other events organised outwith these organisations by other individuals. However, within both cases, it is important to acknowledge the role of a few motivated individuals (and voluntary organisations) that are active within the development process.

### ***5.3 Castle Douglas Food Town***

The Food Town development is the most recent place brand of the case studies in this research, and again, developed in a slightly different way – for slightly different reasons. Castle Douglas emerged as a Food Town in 2002 – after the development of the Book Town and the Artists' Town. Apparently, the concept of adopting a place brand had been mooted prior to the 2001 outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease, but this delayed the project. The Foot and Mouth Disease

outbreak in Dumfries and Galloway severely affected the region, not only through the disease itself, but also through the associated preventative controls and measures. It was the third worst hit region in the whole of the UK (Anderson, 2002). However, what Foot and Mouth Disease did leave was a legacy of additional funding available for rural regeneration. This inevitably benefited the Food Town project – which was seen to not only add economic stimulus to a town, but also to food producers affected by the outbreak. The Food Town Initiative received quite significant funding from Dumfries and Galloway Council and other funding bodies, such as Leader European Funding:

From day one, we were so heavily funded... we just started before Foot and Mouth and we had to back track for about a year, because we couldn't do anything, because of Foot and Mouth, but as soon as Foot and Mouth was gone, the regeneration started to throw money at us to rebuild the area (Food Town Treasurer, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2010)

The Food Town concept emerged through the visions of an influential local councillor, in collaboration with the Community Council. Each local authority in Scotland is divided up into areas represented by Community Councils. Their roles are to reflect and understand the diversity of views and opinions held by the communities that they represent and to communicate such views to the public authorities and other organisations (The Scottish Government, 2005: 1). This usually concerns planning and development issues, but any other issues that may affect the community (such as welfare and the environment). Their constitution encourages them to promote well-being within the community; to foster community spirit and also take any action deemed in the interest of the local community (ibid). Community Councillors are elected for a year by the local community and can



stand for re-election. There are at least seven meetings every year and are open to the wider community (ibid).

Within Castle Douglas, a sub-committee was established within the Community Council in order to look into the idea of adopting a brand for the town. Thus, they did not look into addressing an issue – as was the case in Wigtown and to a lesser extent in Kirkcudbright – but deliberately set out to adopt a brand. They then set about convincing people to buy into the brand. Soon after establishing the Food Town, the Community Council's involvement in the initiative somewhat dwindled, before completely exiting the project. They had created the brand, which was their aim:

At the time there were probably 7 or 8 Community Councillors. Within 6 months, none... They just drifted one at a time. I think they saw it as another Gala Committee – for jamborees up and down the street. They didn't realise how much business-driven it had to be (Food Town Treasurer, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2010)

The argument for this move was that it was felt more appropriate for the food businesses themselves to take over the management of the Food Town – as those who had initiated the development were not involved in food-related businesses:

One of them took a walk up and down the street and counted the cafes, butcher shops, hotels and thought 'Food Town'... Then they asked the food businesses to come along... (Food Town Treasurer, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2010)

The Food Town project was then taken over by a newly formed Food Town Initiative (two members of which are still on the committee), with its own constitution. This is driven by a small voluntary group of individuals. The Food

Town Initiative also employs a consultant / development manager on a part-time basis. The Food Town has a Food Town Day once a year, which acts as promotion of the brand. In 2010, it was estimated that 6,000 people visited Castle Douglas on Food Town Day (Galloway News, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2010: 18). The initiative have also organised local producers markets, although the support for these (from local producers and consumers) has been rather poor. Since the branding, several food-related businesses have been encouraged to open within the town.

It is rather clear that the Food Town brand was developed in a rather different way to the Book Town and the Artists' Town, and also for rather different reasons. With Castle Douglas not really needing regeneration, it is apparent that the Food Town development emerged for rather different reasons than both Wigtown and Kirkcudbright. Castle Douglas was not experiencing economic decline. It was already a thriving and prosperous market town and there were not many empty retail units. Castle Douglas adopted the Food Town brand in order to sustain its economic position and to strengthen it, rather than re-start or re-invent it:

We couldn't just sit back and think that that was always going to be the case, because you then start to get other places improving their towns. When that happened, it was possible that Castle Douglas would lose some of the trade that they were used to. I think this is one of the reasons why, in any small town, you have to keep looking, what else can one do here? Always to keep this interest and to keep the town on the map. If you don't do it, you are going to lose. We were lucky in that, yes, we had a good local trade here, but they still have to rely on visitors. The visitors are the people who bring in the extra money. You have to be seen to be doing something (Anonymous interview, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2010)

Cynically, some felt that Castle Douglas adopted a brand because it could not be left behind. As the Treasurer of the Food Town Initiative commented, "The Food Town was started by the Community Council... because there was the Artists' Town and the Book Town, and I think they were feeling left out..." (10<sup>th</sup> March 2010). Wigtown and Kirkcudbright both had adopted brands, and it was perceived – based on the traditional economic importance of Castle Douglas as a market town – that Castle Douglas also needed to adopt a brand. There did appear to be a 'keeping up with the Jones' type of mentality about adopting the brand – in order to keep place competitive, in a perceived-to-be increasingly theme town dominated environment:

The Food Town brand is an artificial construct. It was devised by locally elected members, because, with Kirkcudbright having their brand, and Wigtown having a brand, and Castle Douglas being seen as quite an important town in the Stewartry, it was felt that Castle Douglas needed a brand. What did it have to offer? Well, in the vicinity, there is a local brewery, there are some good butchers, there are obviously a load of farmers in the area who produce good quality meats and there are people like Buccleuch Meats – over at Castle MacLellan, who make dairy products. That gave them this kind of idea 'Let's focus on food and call ourselves a Food Town'. (Anonymous interview, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010)

However, the brand did emerge from one that was rooted in the perceived strengths of the town: food-related businesses. It became clear through various interviews that the food theme was decided (as opposed to another brand), as it was perceived to be the strongest theme that emerged from the town. Thus, the brand was built around what the town had to offer – what was already there:

We looked at Castle Douglas as a whole. What did we have? The one thing we do have are four very good butcher shops in town. Very good bakers... I

think we still had one deli at the time... We used to have two very good up-market grocers in town. It had always been a town that people came to shop for their food – more than anything else... (Anonymous interview, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2010)

The reason Castle Douglas adopted the Food Town brand (like the other two cases) was to bring more people and investment to the town. It was an economic tool, to add distinctiveness to place. As the Food Town Business Plan states, "The main aim is to increase visitor numbers, thus boosting the local economy as a whole and in particular benefiting local restaurants, retailers, accommodation providers and food and drink producers. In addition to the economic benefits to Castle Douglas and environs, an increase in 'Food Town' business would also bring social and cultural benefits" (Warnock and Laughlin, 2006: 4). According to the Leader application in March 2005, the primary aims of Castle Douglas Food Town are "to promote Castle Douglas as a theme town in conjunction with other Dumfries and Galloway theme towns. Castle Douglas Food Town will be promoted as a market town of retail excellence especially for food and drink... Aims are to increase visitor numbers and add growth to the economy for our indigenous retailers, hoteliers / accommodation, food and drink producers. This increase in business will ensure the overall sustainability of Castle Douglas Food Town and enhance associated economic, social and cultural benefits" (Leader Application, March 2005):

It's like any small country town, unless you have a theme or something like that, you are not going to attract people all the time. Country towns like this do depend on visitors (Anonymous interview, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2010)

Interestingly, the above quote identifies the importance of adopting a theme – to such an extent, which implies that if a brand was not created, it was perceived that

the town would have suffered economically. It was thus seen as vital for the town to have a theme in order to attract extra visitors. Not only did Castle Douglas feel like it *had* to have a brand – in order to be competitive – but also it had learnt from other place brand developments. In this sense, those involved in the early stages of the Food Town development observed what was going on in Wigtown – as the longest established theme town in Dumfries and Galloway – and thought their own town could benefit from it also:

We looked at that and we did discuss how Wigtown had prospered since creating the Book Town. Wigtown then, was still in its early stages, but it was progressing. There was no doubt if one went to visit Wigtown, you could see the difference in what was happening in the town. It was becoming more alive again. We thought about all this. Could Castle Douglas have a theme of a Food Town? (Anonymous interview, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2010)

However, a local historian in his book *The Kirkcudbrightshire Companion*, questioned the whole branding of Castle Douglas as a Food Town, and was rather cynical and sceptical (see Gordon, 2008):

In 2002 Castle Douglas began to be marketed to tourists as the Food Town. After Wigtown in western Galloway became the Book Town and Kirkcudbright re-defined itself as the Artists' Town, Castle Douglas may have felt naked without a designation of its own. Though it has a fine array of butchers and bakers, there is no particular reason why Castle Douglas should claim such a status ahead of any number of similar towns in Scotland. Castle Douglas should take pride in what it is; misleading marketing will do it no good (Gordon, 2008: 34)

#### **5.4 Different Development Trajectories**

Hopefully, it has become clear within this chapter that the place brands in Dumfries and Galloway emerged in rather different ways (see Appendix Ten) – with different levels of funding (see Appendix Nine); with different governance structures, for rather different reasons, but with ultimately, the same goal – to add distinctiveness to place, to put these places on the map and to attract tourists and further investment. Their developments can be seen as a mix of the contingent effects of history (e.g. artistic heritage) and current events (e.g. competition between places regarding branding initiatives); the initiative of a few motivated individuals and community organisations; investment from private enterprise; and involvement from the public sector. Whilst there are a number of similarities and commonalities that run through the development processes, there are also a number of differences in the way the brands have developed:

It is quite interesting in that they are three distinctly different places. The background and history to them is distinctly different. The integrity of the brand is different in each one. In a sense, Wigtown had a few bookshops, but it could never have claimed to be a Book Town, in any stretch of the imagination. They have done it very successfully, but it has been from a very low base. Whereas Kirkcudbright always was the artists' town – it has a real depth and integrity about that brand, because it has all the artistic links and cultural links that have developed over the past 100 years. You could quite credibly argue that it is the Scottish equivalent of St Ives, or whatever. It has a long history and a long provenance in that sense, whereas Wigtown didn't... Kirkcudbright, arguably, had the greatest – it made more sense to brand Kirkcudbright as an Artists' Town – although it came to the table later than the others. Wigtown seized upon an opportunity, very successfully. Castle Douglas saw the success of the other two and decided it would brand something itself. I think that it is a fair summation about how it worked out in the practical sense (Scottish Enterprise, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2010)

Castle Douglas' brand was built around what the town had to offer – what was already there (although it must be noted, only one part of what was there). This is slightly different to both of the other two cases. Wigtown's Book Town was constructed as a result of a national competition, and arguably, had very little association with the actual place, whereas Kirkcudbright's Artists' Town brand emerged out of what the town once had (i.e. not what was currently there, but which was once there). Whether they developed as a result of being selected, or because of a strong sense of heritage, or because others were adopting brands – it is clear that there is not *one* way in which place brands emerge:

I can see why you are interested in the three theme towns. They are all totally different. Kirkcudbright benefits from the fact that it is rooted in history and that message comes through in all different dimensions. Wigtown, you can argue, was created from scratch, but now, it has been there and is established. It has become its own history really. I would say Castle Douglas is in more embryonic form, in terms of its theming and where it goes (Areas Manager, VisitScotland, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2010)

They all have different contexts, different histories and, to a point, different levels of success and acclaim. As noted by one interviewee, "They have all been taken forward in very different ways, because of the different organisations that have got involved, and what they represent" (Economic Development Officer, D&G Council, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010). As Macleod notes "To paraphrase Shakespeare, Castle Douglas Food Town was 'born' with its identity as a market town associated with food and the farming industry. Kirkcudbright Artists' Town has 'achieved' its identity over some 100 years through its association with famous artists. And Wigtown Book Town has its identity 'thrust' upon it by outsiders, albeit willingly accepted by some of the inhabitants" (2009:141). Whilst this quote acts as a useful

summary – noting that developments have happened in different ways – it is much more complex and contested than Macleod makes out. For example, Castle Douglas' relationship to food and farming is only one aspect of the town, as is Kirkcudbright's association with artists. Places, after all, have multiple identities and mean different things to different people. This will be explored further in forthcoming chapters.

However, it is important to note that the development of Hay on Wye Book Town was market driven, initiated directly by one entrepreneurial bookseller (see Seaton, 1999). Whilst the role of private investment should not be underestimated in the creation of the place brands in this research, the place brands have all been planned in the sense that they were designed to bring in tourists. The main difference is that they were planned by community organisations – not the private sector, nor the public sector<sup>30</sup>. Whilst there may not be a 'grand plan' for each development – in partial recognition of the reliance on private sector investment, from small and medium sized enterprises; motivated individuals and community organisations – the developments in this research cannot be seen as totally unplanned. They are artificial brand names that have been constructed, with the hope of development around the theme, which have developed around the brand. It is also worth noting that it took Hay on Wye a number of years to fully establish (Seaton, 1999). The developments of the place brands in this research have been initiated much quicker.

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<sup>30</sup> Although of course, the public sector was fairly influential in the development of the Book Town through the Book Town competition.



### ***5.5 Place Brands for Economic Development***

What is clear is that whilst all of the developments have emerged in slightly different ways, they were all designed to attract investment and visitors to the towns. They clearly represent the outwardly oriented focus of entrepreneurial governance (see Hubbard and Hall, 1998). However, where Hubbard and Hall (1998) identify a range of similar policies adopted between cities as a model of entrepreneurial governance (e.g. place promotion; physical redevelopment; flagship projects), in the small rural places in this research, the main emphasis was placed on promoting a particular image of place and staging festivals and events. There is much less emphasis on the physical redevelopment of place and the development of flagship projects, like there is in larger cities. Therefore, whilst some of the generic features of the entrepreneurial model of governance identified by Hubbard and Hall (1998) can also be seen in the present rural cases, it is all on a much smaller scale, with much more limited funds available for their implementation.

Whilst culture, festivals and events are also important within the entrepreneurial city (see Hubbard and Hall, 1998), the developments in the place brands in this research are on a different scale compared to larger urban areas, that compete for mega events like the Olympics, City of Culture status and World Fairs. Culture is being used in the developments in order to 'sell' places to potential visitors, similarly to that experienced in urban areas (see Philo and Kearns, 1993), but on a much smaller scale. Nevertheless, as a respondent from Dumfries and Galloway Council commented, "Culture is only important in terms of the economy if it is bringing people here" (Economic Development Officer, D&G Council, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010). Another respondent noted, "We are not into culture for culture's sake. We are into culture for the economic benefit that can be derived from it" (Economic

Development Officer, D&G Council, 28<sup>th</sup> October 2009). It must be acknowledged that culture is often used, not only to attract visitors, but as the impetus for whole regeneration strategies:

I think it is very important because for economic regeneration, geographically, we are not well placed... our cultural activities are the backbone of what regeneration we have. It is important that we use that avenue, because there is precious little else available to us (Kirkcudbright Forum, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010)

According to the Yellow Book (2005) study, which researched the establishment of a Kirkcudbright Art Gallery, "cultural tourism is a key element of the region's appeal to visitors" (2005: 24). As Macleod notes "the underlying motive of these initiatives, which have branded the towns with specific identities, is to increase the attractiveness of the towns to tourists and day-trippers, thereby improving the economy" (2009: 133).

Regardless of these differences, it is clear that the brands are used to add competitiveness to place, and lead to economic development. As one interviewee noted, "In terms of the economy, [the process of branding place] is about attracting more people, and more spend from the one's that do come – getting them to spend more, and come back, and tell others about it" (Economic Development Officer, D&G Council, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010). Thus, it is clear that the place brand developments are designed to encourage people to visit place and, as a result, to spend money. Interestingly, it is not just about getting people to spend, but as noted it is about getting "more spend from the one's that do come". This automatically assumes, however, that people are in a position to spend. Therefore, they are after people who spend money – or more cynically, those with money to

spend. The target audience of such place brands will be critically examined in chapter eight.

However, whilst these developments can be seen to represent the 'think global, act local' philosophy of entrepreneurial governance, that same philosophy seems to be at odds with the position of a number of public sector agencies. Interestingly, at the same time as these local economic development campaigns are underway, many of the public sector agencies have become more focused on the global and wider picture than the local. Organisations such as VisitScotland and Scottish Enterprise are now interested in attracting investment and tourists to Scotland as a whole – rather than trying to sell individual regions in competition with other Scottish regions. This macro focus is obviously focusing on national and international level, which has left smaller, rural communities (outside the Highlands and Islands) to do it for themselves:

Looking back, historically, going back into structures, it was Scottish Enterprise Dumfries and Galloway, Dumfries and Galloway Tourist Board – as part of the Scottish Tourist Board and more recently VisitScotland – Dumfries and Galloway Council and our other local partners. All of those organisations at that time had a more autonomous view of Dumfries and Galloway, and the development of Dumfries and Galloway as a place. Of course, what has happened in the last 10 years, has been a shift away from that. Scottish Enterprise has been reorganised – VisitScotland has been reorganised and the Area Tourist Board's no longer exist. That context has changed. That discussion around each area focusing around its own patch and trying to develop its own distinctive brand and marketing plan for its own patch has moved on – it is fair to say. That context has completely changed as well (Scottish Enterprise, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2010)

In relation to the above quote, it may appear that as the public sector organisations (such as Scottish Enterprise and VisitScotland) have been reorganised and now have more national agendas, remits and focuses, each individual region (as places in their own right) have become less important than Scotland as a whole, from a public sector perspective – especially Dumfries and Galloway. This questions the application of the 'think global, act local' rhetoric of entrepreneurial governance, at smaller, rural scales:

In terms of Scottish Enterprise, we have six key destinations in Scotland – Dumfries and Galloway is not one of them (Scottish Enterprise, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2010)

Scottish Enterprise is focused on opportunities that give the greatest net benefit to Scotland as a whole. In deciding on those destinations and which product areas – like Forest Tourism – Scottish Enterprise will take the view at the Scottish level, those are the opportunities that are the greatest potential. They may not necessarily be the same opportunities for Dumfries and Galloway. Cultural tourism may be seen as big opportunity by Dumfries and Galloway, but in the big picture, it's not a big deal for Scotland (Scottish Enterprise, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2010)

This trend reinforces the need for small, rural communities to do it for themselves. Local economies and communities still need to attract people to their own places and businesses – and are therefore in competition with other places – both outside Scotland, but also within Scotland. Whereas Boyle and Hughes (1994) and Ward (2003) identify an active role of the public sector in entrepreneurial strategies of governance, at a small, rural scale, as exemplified through the current cases, the role of the public sector is much more questionable.

## **5.6 Place Brands and Competition**

Another key feature of entrepreneurial governance is that of growing competition between places for tourists and investment. This can be clearly seen, to some extent, within the case studies in this research. As Wahab and Cooper (2001) argue, places that are not seen to be competitive, face decline. Such a mentality can be clearly seen within Castle Douglas' motivation to acquire a place brand. As identified, Castle Douglas Food Town emerged due to a feeling that the place cannot be left behind without a brand. It was felt that the place needed a brand, in order to compete with other places. This clearly shows an element of competition. Indeed, all of the place brands can be interpreted as tools to increase the competitiveness of place – by making place distinctive, in order to attract tourists and investment. However, it is not quite so clear-cut that places are in competition with other places, and the brands are used to increase the competitiveness of that place over others.

The Glorious Galloway Consortium, and the *Food, Art, Books* campaign is a case in point. Whilst these places can all be viewed as being in relative competition with each other and other places (for tourists and investment – both public and private), the places in this research are also being cooperative with each other, through partnership, in order to compete with other areas. The Food, Art, Books campaign clearly shows an element of partnership and cooperation between the places, in order to compete with more popular regions, or other (larger?) places, which may be better known.

This collaboration was mooted in the Food Town's business plan in 2006 by Warnock and Laughlin (2006). It was perceived that by promoting together, this would increase the appeal of the region – emphasising other things to do as well.

This was originally part-funded by VisitScotland's Challenge Fund and private business sponsors. The campaign came into existence in 2007. Not only did it represent an example of partnership working and collaboration, but the brands were also perceived to associate well together. As one interviewee commented, "Books, the artistic heritage and food does actually tie together as quite a nice package" (Scottish Enterprise, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2010), potentially, for a particular 'type' of visitor:

The three themes of food, art and books would seem to fit well together to form an appealing triumvirate, and also match well with the profile of current visitors to Dumfries and Galloway, who tend to be older, relatively affluent people with an interest in cultural pursuits. It is not difficult to imagine how advertising campaigns or promotional materials might look if they were selling 'culture breaks', for instance (Warnock and Laughlin, 2006: 32)

### ***5.7 Contested Notion of 'Partnership'***

Clearly, as just identified, the three places are working collaboratively, through partnership, in order to promote the region to tourists. Whilst this can be seen as partnership working, this takes a slightly different form to the type of partnership working identified by Harvey (1989) in relation to entrepreneurial governance. This notion viewed places as in competition with other places – not in partnership or cooperation with. The notion of partnership, as seen in the F.A.B campaign, still reflects an entrepreneurial agenda. However, it also illustrates an issue of scale in relation to the application of entrepreneurial governance in a rural context, whereby small places need to cooperate through partnership (yet at the same time, compete) in order to compete, in recognition of a different context to that experienced by a large urban area.

Also, at the local scale, notions of partnership are clearly evident, and support rural policy rhetoric in Scotland that emphasises the role of partnerships (See Scottish Government, 2010). However, the actual nature of 'partnerships' should be explored, as the term is extremely vague and contested. Whilst the public sector was involved in the place brand developments – to various extents – as was the private sector, the role of the third sector should also be acknowledged within the process. The community sector plays a significant role within the development of place brands as entrepreneurial strategies of place development in Dumfries and Galloway. Indeed, it is these various community organisations (such as Wigtown Chamber of Commerce; Kirkcudbright Forum; Food Town Initiative) that are responsible for the management of the place brands. In addition to these community organisations, there are also other organisations that contribute to the place brands in other ways (such as Kirkcudbright 2000; Wigtown Festival Company). This is rather different to the current mode of urban branding, identified by Greenberg (2003), which sees the brand as centrally managed by the city agencies, alongside professional marketing firms and integrated across public and private initiatives. This may reflect the rural nature of the region, and the small sizes of the towns. In this sense, the experience of entrepreneurial governance at the local level in small rural places, such as the cases explored in this research, is rather different to that experienced in larger urban areas:

A lot of the history of these types of projects... was driven by what we could call 'Community Initiative Organisations'. They were community-based organisations that wanted to do something for their local community. Many of the things they probably wanted to do, historically, would have been council responsibilities... It was this identification by communities, that they wanted to do more, and it was probably also identification by the council saying, these types of organisations are quite a good thing, because we are able to empower communities to do much more for their local communities,

and from the council point of view, we are going to get a bigger bang for our buck (Europe Officer, D&G Council, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2010)

It was at the time when community development started to come into its own and there was pressure on communities – both external pressure to do things for themselves and to a certain extent, internal pressure and the feeling that if we don't try and do something for ourselves, nobody else is going to do it for us (Development Officer, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009)

However, we must critically examine what is meant by 'community-led development'. As has been documented within geography and within community studies, communities are fractured and complex. Each place has multiple communities, and these communities are contested and heterogeneous. Of course, communities are made up of individuals – with a variety of different motivations, attitudes and lifestyles all at play. Whilst there will be some connections between different communities – and indeed some people being in numerous communities – there are also divisions. In this sense, surely community developments will potentially represent the visions of one (or a few) community / communities – but not all. As Warnock and Laughlin claim, "At present, the [Food Town] committee is acknowledged to be too small and not properly representative of the Castle Douglas community" (2006: 36).

We must acknowledge the role of motivated individuals within community-led developments. It is important to note that notions of community engagement and local participation in rural development are high on the political agenda in Scotland (see Wright and Lawlor, 2010:4). As acknowledged in all of the place brand developments, much of the work (all of the work in the Artists' Town) is undertaken by volunteers and motivated individuals. As one interviewee commented "All these things need one or two enthusiastic folk that drive it... It all boils down to the



enthusiasm within the community to make it work. Without that, no matter what the hell you call it, it is not going to make any odds" (Kirkcudbright Forum, 13<sup>th</sup> July 2010). As Harvey (1989) notes, development could easily be shaped by a particular individual with power (or in a position of authority). This is the case, to some extent, in these cases – although, not always a single individual, but a body or committee of individuals also:

It is individuals who have made the big changes to Kirkcudbright, not the council or groups... it is individuals like myself, galleries and other people organising stuff that have actually made it the Artists' Town, or on its way to becoming again (Gallery Owner 14<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

Many of these enthusiastic and motivated individuals are involved in several different community organisations within the places. As one respondent noted "as you know from your recent experience of what it is like – people tend to crop up in two or three committees, just wearing a different hat" (Development Officer, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009). As one book dealer, who was influential in the setting up of Wigtown Book Town, commented, "this was a community effort – but the community has no real idea of what happened really" (Book Dealer, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009).

It is therefore down to the people who get involved and make things happen, who inevitably affect the shape of development. As one interviewee asserted, "The point is that the group of people who are active in the town – who do things – recognise that we need to have a brand" (Kirkcudbright Forum, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010). Needless to say, those actively involved in the developments will have the greatest input and impact on how place is promoted, represented and managed. As such,

as McAreavey (2006) acknowledges, a few motivated individuals can take control in development and shape it in particular ways:

The brand is merely going to be the badge of the class that runs it, rather than truly representing the underlying quality that they wish to promote – which is quite genuine. Books are valuable; art is valuable; food is valuable (Author and Events Organiser, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2010)

Entrepreneurial governance strategies could thus be argued to have a lack of political inclusiveness and accountability (see Young *et al.*, 2006). However, it is also important to acknowledge that the contribution by each sector within the development of the place brands also varied across the cases. For instance, in Wigtown, the public sector contributed rather significant amounts of public funding into the development project in the early days (Seaton, 1997c). The Book Town Company received significant public funding (c. £2m) – much of which went to the refurbishment of the County Buildings (see Galloway News, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2000; Galloway Gazette, 5<sup>th</sup> May 2000). This came from various sources, including the European Regional Development Fund, the local enterprise company, Dumfries and Galloway Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund. The town also benefited from various public-sector grants, including a scheme to spruce up the buildings around the town square; and to host various events. I was informed by one officer from the public sector that Wigtown received significant public funding because the Book Town development fitted into the wider regional strategies of the time:

We were very supportive of the Book Town, because that played very much into our strategy at the time, which was trying to regenerate the western part of Dumfries and Galloway... Regenerating the western part of the region was a priority for us – recognising that it was more deeply rural than other parts of the region. There was a job to be done there, in helping out

with that regeneration. Wigtown Book Town was a good example of that, and it played into the strategy around tourism development and rural regeneration, community development. It ticked all of those boxes (Scottish Enterprise, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2010).

Wigtown Book Town has thus benefited from public sector support and funding – to a much greater extent than other Book Town developments across Europe (see Seaton, 1996b). With regard to Kirkcudbright, the public sector funding has been much less, although significant funding has been contributed to the summer art exhibitions (organised by Kirkcudbright 2000), which could be seen as reinforcing, or supporting the Artists' Town brand (although, is separate to it). Similarly, Castle Douglas Food Town has received regular public funding for the general running of the initiative, including core administration costs (such as the co-ordinators salary). They have also received regular funding for the staging of Food Town Day, and other funding for various projects. All in all, each town has benefited from public sector support in different ways, and the funding has come from a variety of different sources (including Leader; DGC; SEDG). Indeed, the developments have also benefited from funding from within the same organisations, but different committee (such as the Area Committees; Planning and Environment etc). In essence, the role and contribution of the public sector has differed between the cases. Thus, we should be critically aware that the role and involvement of actors differs between cases, and also within each case, each actor / sector does not necessarily have an equal contribution (see Little, 2001).

### ***5.8 Contestations Within Partnerships***

Whilst the notion of partnership has been questioned somewhat by identifying how the developments emerged in different ways (through different actors and organisations) and with different levels of involvement from the public sector, the

notion of partnership is even more problematic. According to Slee and Snowdon, “partnerships are an arrangement in which objectives are shared and a common agenda is developed between different agencies in pursuit of a common goal” (1997: i). In relation to the development of the place brands in Dumfries and Galloway, Macleod concludes “There has been a heightened sense of community through the pursuit of a common goal and an enhanced sense of unity through the consolidation of an identity” (2009: 143). However, my own experiences and findings are rather contrary to this. My research has found developments manifest with contestations and struggles. Whilst I found a common goal – in terms of achieving economic revitalisation of place – the route in order to achieve that, was most certainly not harmonious or straight-forward, but one fraught with multiple and contested visions. Different actors (and communities) relate to the developments in different ways, and have different ideas about how the brands should develop. This acknowledges that communities are heterogeneous and that there are potentially several different ‘communities of interest’ in the same place (see Slee and Snowdon, 1997; Shields, 1992), with different motivations, agendas, opinions and values. Not all of these will have equal power (Shortall, 2004). Thus, as a result, there are struggles and contestations of power and over different visions, between those involved in the brand developments and those not involved, but also struggles amongst those involved themselves. Whilst some of these struggles were rather explicit, others were much more implicit and subtle.

As will be explored more thoroughly in chapter seven, within all of the three places, there were contestations over the actual meaning of the place brands, and what they referred to. In addition to these contestations, there were also struggles more broadly about how the place should be packaged (i.e. contestations over having a brand altogether). For the present chapter, the point to be made is that

the partnerships within the development of the place brands were not conflict-free and could not be seen entirely as 'acts of union'. As one book dealer who was involved in the early stages of Book Town noted, "if you have a committee, you do have disagreements" (Book Dealer, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009). There were a number of people and organisations, all with different motivations and perspectives. As one interviewee commented, even within the council – there are different perspectives – "different elements of the council support different elements of the Book Town" (Cultural Services Manager, D&G Council, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009). However, not all saw the Book Town as a tool for economic development. Others saw it as a mechanism to promote reading; others saw it as a way of physically regenerating the town; others saw it as a tourist attraction:

Firstly, I come from a literature background... I am really keen to obviously develop the concept of literature and the ideas within words, represented in books or e-books or wherever. So, my personal motive was that... There were those, of political persuasion that regarded it [Book Town] as an opportunity to advance their profile and career within Dumfries and Galloway. There were those – the bookshops – who thought it was entirely a means to sell their books – second hand books in Wigtown, not new... There were a whole other set of people who just thought that they knew better than everybody else, and then... there was the people of the town, i.e. those who had lived there for generations, or who were not involved in books. I think they felt dispossessed by the whole process (Author and Events Organiser, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2010)

Not all of these motivations and directions are pleasing to all. As one interviewee noted, "It has not worked out in the ways that I expected Book Town to be..." (Bookseller, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009). Thus, there were, and continue to be, differences of opinion. Indeed, with all of these different visions, I was informed that there was never a single vision with regard to the Book Town development. As a result of

these disagreements of direction, some people have joined the Book Town, whilst others have left<sup>31</sup>.

What is therefore quite apparent is that the 'Book Town Committee' or 'Community' are not a harmonious and homogenous entity. There were (and continue to be) all sorts of local politics within the development of the Book Town – which really highlights the nuances and complex trajectories of development. There was never *one* clear trajectory, but a fractured and fraught inter-play of motivations, intentions and ambitions. As noted by one interviewee, "there were various fractions within the town, which all saw the remit of Wigtown Book Town as being entirely different from everybody else" (Author and Events Organiser, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2010). Indeed, one bookseller commented, "Their ideas were not my ideas..." (Bookseller, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009). This comment from an individual who was part of the 'Book Town' project highlights that the Book Town development cannot be seen as a clear 'us' and 'them' scenario.

One of the main challenges in the early stages of the Book Town was the extent to which the Book Town should be a tourism initiative or a book trading initiative. Indeed, this dilemma was clearly acknowledged by one of the early Book Town development officers. What he stated was that the Book Town as a tourism initiative became stronger than as a book trading initiative. The Book Town was perceived to be all about attracting people to the town – irrespective of whether they actually buy books:

There was always a tension between the initiative as a tourism initiative and a book trading initiative. If the book dealers had been stronger, then it would

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<sup>31</sup> Field Diary, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2009

have skewed towards book trading initiative. However, it became apparent that the Book Town was much stronger as a tourism initiative, and so that led the direction of the company (Former Book Town Development Officer, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2009)

This clearly addresses the presence of various struggles and contestations within the development of the Book Town. Such struggles will be explored in further chapters. However, such a situation was not limited to the Book Town. Similar cultural politics also exist in Kirkcudbright Artists' Town, with multiple visions, agendas and motivations. As one artist commented:

My impression is that the Kirkcudbright 2000 committee – their focus is much more about the good of the town, and the community – not necessarily for the arts. There are a lot of non-arts people on that committee and I think they had a real problem with why include contemporary arts? It just wasn't on their agenda really (Artist, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

Similar struggles and contestations of visions was also noted by Gordon (2006), who acknowledged:

John's [Halliday] input into the original concept of the Homecoming was seminal. But such an enormous undertaking could never be based on one man's vision. It had to be a co-operative endeavour. John, however, was never a natural committee man. There were differences of emphasis, exacerbated by clashes of personality, and John eventually found himself to have been marginalized (Gordon, 2006: 156)

These findings support McAreavey (2006) who argued that such rural development processes are affected by micro-politics, including personality clashes; abuses of power; and differences of opinion. Like the Book Town and

Artists' Town developments, there were also multiple ideas and notions as to what a Food Town should be (see Simpson, 2005), alongside various micro-politics. Indeed, several informants commented how they felt there was no common vision for what the Food Town should be (Field Diary, 12<sup>th</sup> March 2010). As one interviewee noted "There were a lot of people who actually saw it as something different to what it actually turned into" (Food Town Committee, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2010). There were clearly multiple agendas at play. As in Wigtown, there are many different agendas linked to the Food Town – not just a purely economic agenda using food to attract tourists. The Food Town also aims to promote local produce, healthy eating and to assist local producers. As Warnock and Laughlin express, "It is of some concern that there is not unanimity of purpose amongst all those who are currently involved in the initiative" (2006: 23). These findings support Hubbard and Hall (1998), who acknowledge that there are lots of different agendas and motivations that run through the development process. This section has identified numerous contestations within the development of the place brands. It has therefore highlighted that notions of partnership and 'togetherness' in practice, are rather problematic. These struggles and contestations will be further explored in forthcoming chapters.

### ***5.9 Chapter Summary***

Hopefully it has become clear in this chapter that the application of entrepreneurial strategies of place development in rural contexts is a diverse and rather contested process in practice. The place brands can all be seen to address economic imperatives, which very much fits the outwardly oriented stance of entrepreneurial governance. However, the ways in which they were developed differed between the cases. Whilst there are similarities in the application of place brands in a rural context, to that commonly discussed in urban contexts, there are also significant



differences. Similarly to urban entrepreneurial strategies, the use of place marketing and culture were evident within the current cases, but much less emphasis on physical redevelopment (compared to that noted in cities). Therefore, the type of development strategies deployed between places, whilst having similarities, also bear significant differences.

It is thus rather apparent, within this chapter, how several of the key notions of entrepreneurial governance are rather problematic in practice, including those of 'partnership' and 'competition'. Whilst places can be seen to be in competition with other places for investment and tourists, it is clear that in practice, in a rural context, it is not quite so clear-cut. Whilst the places in this research could be seen as in direct competition with each other, and other places in the region, it is also clear that there is an element of cooperation. This can be seen through the Food, Art, Books promotional strategy, which shows partnership working between the three towns, in order to attract more visitors to the region. Whilst they are all competing, they are also in partnership together, and cooperating.

Not only did the partnership between the private and public sector differ between cases (in terms of contributions), it was also clear that motivated individuals and community groups play a significant role within the development of such branding strategies. This is much less common with reference to the application of entrepreneurial strategies of development in larger urban contexts, which tend to view partnership between predominantly private sector and public sector actors (see Harvey, 1989). Whereas it is noted that the public sector plays an influential role in place branding strategies in urban areas (see Greenberg, 2003), in the current case, it was community groups who drove development (indeed, not necessarily one group per brand). Thus, place brands develop in different ways, in

different contexts (with varying level of input from a variety of actors). The notion of partnership working (one of the key features of entrepreneurial governance) is therefore contingent on each specific case, and takes different forms in practice. It is also clear through this research that the ideals of 'partnership' working are much more problematic and contested in practice, as different actors seek to develop the place brands in different ways. Slee and Snowdon (1997) argue that partnerships are arrangements of union, working towards the same goal. However, this chapter acknowledges that such partnerships in rural development are much more fragmented, nuanced and contested.

Thus, it is clear that the development of place brands is not a conflict-free process. It is fraught with cultural politics, community fractions and issues regarding taste and place identity more broadly. Whilst this chapter has very broadly outlined how and why the place brand developments emerged, it has neglected, consciously, the contestations and the politics that emerge through such a process. There are multiple visions about how place's should develop and indeed about how particular brands should develop – or indeed, what they mean. These will be explored in detail in chapter seven. Having identified the role of entrepreneurial governance in relation to the development of place brands, the next chapter seeks to explore the ways in which the places have been (re)constructed and transformed around and through the brands – as it has been noted that such entrepreneurial place initiatives are designed to stimulate private investment and visitors.

## **Chapter Six: How are Rural Places (Re)Constructed Around Branding?**

Having explored the governance of such place brand developments in the previous chapter, this chapter examines the impact of such developments on the places themselves. Indeed, it has been argued by Gibson (2002) that the cultural industries in New South Wales have transformed places. It has also been acknowledged by Seaton (1999; 1996a) that the development of the Book Town brand in Hay-on-Wye has increased the tourism and retail sectors in the town and given the place a much stronger destination identity. Finally, Kavaratzis (2005) argues that place brands are designed to manage places, and as such, seek to attract particular kinds of investment, that 'fit' the brand. With such a situation, this chapter seeks to explore the ways in which places are transformed through and around the place brand.

### **6.1 Place Brands as Discourse**

As a Yellow Book study notes, "the tourism market... is moving away from simplistic models based on major attractions, and towards the development and marketing of a *whole place experience*. The Book Town project demonstrates this clearly, and the same principle will certainly apply in Kirkcudbright" (2004: 10). By branding a place to be associated with particular forms of culture, one potentially attempts to actively construct place (at least symbolically) and the social space of society. As Urry (1995) notes, culture and the cultural industries have the potential to transform and re-present place in particular ways:

It is inevitable that we are constructing a narrative. That is what I think FAB and the Artists' Town is... If you are opening your Country Life magazine, and you see a piece about Kirkcudbright Artists' Town, there is a narrative around why you would want to go to Kirkcudbright – there are some art shops; an art exhibition; museums where some famous people painted (D&G Councillor, 16<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

As a result of (and through) branding, particular narratives and discourses of place have been constructed. What is interesting in all three of the towns is that their development really emerges through a communication of ideas and visions seeking dominance within place. The organisations and committees driving the developments have no power to actually control the types of development that may occur, or acquire properties and turn them into bookshops, art galleries or food outlets. As the Development Plan Review of the Book Town acknowledges "There is of course a weakness in the Business Plan in that WBTC do not have control of the vacant properties, nor can they influence sale prices to ensure that book businesses are not priced out of the property market" (SWRC, 1997: 9). They can only try and influence and stimulate particular kinds of investment, rather than control it:

When you look at destinations, no organisation, whether it is the tourist board, or national or local government can control anything, except part of the promotion. What I would argue, is that place branding and place promotion is essentially about imaging through advertising and things you can actually buy (Tony Seaton, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2008)

Therefore, the most dominant 'vision' of the place brand committees (although as acknowledged in chapter five, there was never a single shared 'vision') had to be bought into, by private entrepreneurs. It would be these entrepreneurs, alongside motivated volunteers and development workers, to make the place brands a reality and a *'whole place experience'* (or not!). Indeed, they would shape the developments in particular ways. The stronger (or more dominant or legitimate) particular visions become (supported by investment), the greater the extent to

which the place is (re)constructed in that particular way, and the more likely a 'whole place experience' is to develop.

The public sector, and the development initiatives can only make the conditions favourable for investment. As noted in the Book Town Business Plan (December 1997), "although Wigtown Book Town does not have control over the properties, this potential weakness has been addressed, as far as possible, by approaching the selling agencies involved with a view to getting properties sold to book businesses" (Wigtown Book Town Company, 1997: 4). Thus, booksellers were encouraged to relocate to and support Book Town – and potential available properties were promoted for such use (see SRWC, 1997).

The brands are therefore tools for implicitly managing places – managing place as product and how place is 'sold' (and represented) (see Kavaratzis, 2005: 334; Freire, 2005; Rainisto, 2003: 3). As Warnock and Laughlin note, "although [CDFTI] is responsible for promoting Castle Douglas Food Town, it does not own, or have control of, the many parts of the 'product'. The initiative's main role in product development must therefore be one of influencing and advocacy" (2006: 27). Despite Kavaratzis (2005) and others arguing that brands are designed to manage places, it is clear that with the fragmented nature of governance of the place brand developments in this research (as discussed in chapter five), the brands are not centrally controlled or managed, and is therefore reliant on buy-in from private enterprise and motivated volunteers. The management is therefore dependent on a communication of ideas, which may appeal to investors.

Whilst the actual materiality of the place brand is outwith the control of the committees driving the developments, it is clear that the places have experienced

material changes associated with the branding. These material developments not only shape and transform the place, but also reinforce the brand. In this sense, the place brand is constantly reconstructed and evolves in light of the actual materiality of place and vice versa.

## ***6.2 Transformation of Place: Material Changes and Place Branding***

What has become clear is that, through place branding, places are themselves transformed and reconstructed in material ways. The brands have not only constructed particular discourses of place, but particular realities also. As O'Connor (1998) notes, culture can be used within the re-positioning of place. Such symbolic re-positioning has material effects:

All three towns, as soon as they were labelled as such, there were more food shops opened in Castle Douglas; more art galleries opened in Kirkcudbright; more bookshops opened in Wigtown. So, something is working somewhere and they seemed to have stayed open, more or less, despite other shops shutting (Artist, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

Following Wigtown winning the Book Town competition, the committee set about attracting booksellers to the town (see SWRC, 1997). Thus, before Wigtown could be actively promoted as a Book Town, it had to become one! Books were not necessarily seen as part of the fabric of the town. As one respondent recalled, "When I was growing up around here, it was very difficult to buy books" (Bookseller, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009). Such a finding supports Bennett and Savani (2003) who claim that place branding can fundamentally change the nature of places. Such a discourse was also communicated through the Book Festival website, which declared "A decade ago Wigtown became Scotland's National Book Town. Since then this tiny town has been transformed from dilapidated

backwater into distinguished literary capital, while its book festival has grown into one of the autumn's best-loved arts gatherings" (Wigtown Book Festival, 2009b). The discourse that the place was a 'dilapidated backwater' and since Book Town has become 'distinguished literary capital' not only alludes to a transformation of place, but also a discourse about the value, worth and legitimacy of particular places and cultural practices. The Book Town brand had to become (and has become?) the legitimate culture of Wigtown, as the place (or 'field') was transformed (see Bourdieu, 1993a).

From a town with one bookshop in 1997, Wigtown is now often referred to as a success story (see McLuckie, 2008). Properties were refurbished, the hotel reopened and the town became home to numerous bookshops, including the makers of miniature books – who held the record for the smallest book in the Guinness Book of Records (see Wright, 1997) and a bookshop specialising in women's studies (Galloway Gazette, 28<sup>th</sup> November 1997) amongst others. Despite this, one bookseller commented, "I think the more the merrier. We have not reached saturation. Undoubtedly we just need more bookshops" (Bookseller, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009). With such an increase in the book-related economy, Macleod (2009: 137) acknowledges the "tangible material changes in the town relating directly to its launch as a Book Town". As the place brands develop and potentially become more associated with place, other investment can occur. As Seaton (1999) notes in relation to Hay-on-Wye, since the town has become the first Book Town, other businesses, such as craft shops, art galleries and cafes have also emerged. This was supported by McLuckie (2008), regarding Wigtown:

A decade on, the community is recognised as a model of small-town regeneration and has become one of the region's cultural hubs. More than

fifty properties have been refurbished and the restored County Buildings have won a Dynamic Places Award. The town now has more than twenty bookshops and book-related businesses (compared to one in 1997)... while elsewhere in Scotland rural towns and villages are losing their amenities, here, the hotel has reopened and new bed and breakfasts and guesthouses have appeared (McLuckie, 2008: 16)

Although similarities exist between Hay-on-Wye (see Seaton, 1999) and Wigtown, it is also clear that the processes involved in the two have been rather different. In Hay-on-Wye, the Book Town brand emerged after the town had developed a community of bookshops (see Seaton, 1999). Whereas, in Wigtown, the brand was implemented in order to stimulate such investment.

A similar trajectory can be noted in relation to Kirkcudbright, although as discussed in chapter five, the town does have an authentic artistic heritage on which to draw on and which is used to add legitimacy to the brand. Despite such heritage, it was still felt that the Artists' Town branding had led to the transformation of Kirkcudbright into an Artists' Town, with more galleries; a potential new gallery of 'National Significance'<sup>32</sup> and the opening of artists studios, all as a result:

It is called the Artists' Town, but... all there was really was one gallery and a few plaques on the walls, saying that various artists had lived there. There was not a lot to see. Now, we have got three galleries and a couple of picture framers, the Tolbooth and the Harbour Gallery are quite busy with exhibitions. We have got WASPS<sup>33</sup> moving into two premises on the High Street and lots of things happening... In my mind, although a lot of the

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<sup>32</sup> This gallery development is a partnership between Kirkcudbright 2000 and Dumfries and Galloway Council.

<sup>33</sup> WASPS (Workshop and Artists' Studio Provision Scotland Ltd) is a charity which provides affordable studio space to artists in Scotland and claims to be one of 'Scotland's largest arts organisations' (WASPS, 2010).



public would probably be horrified, the more galleries the merrier (Gallery Owner, 14<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

As Hudson (2005) acknowledges, in Kirkcudbright (like other Artists' Towns), the number of galleries, art-related businesses and events have increased as a result of branding. It is therefore arguable that the branding has attracted related investment and the development of other events, which continually reproduces the Artists' Town theme. This supports research by Yorkshire Forward (2009), which found that 'themed distinctiveness' potentially changed places in line with the theme and attracted related developments. As one interviewee noted, in relation to the WASPS art studio development, "if we didn't have this branding; if we didn't have this reputation, WASPS wouldn't have looked at Kirkcudbright. They would have thought 'what do we want to go there for?', they haven't gone to Dalbeattie have they?" (Anonymous interview, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010). Indeed, according to an article on the National Federation of Artists' Studio Providers website, WASPS commented: "We were drawn to Kirkcudbright in particular because of its reputation as an 'Artists Town', one of several themed towns in Dumfries & Galloway" (NFASP, 2010). The Artists' Town branding therefore affected their decision to invest in the town.

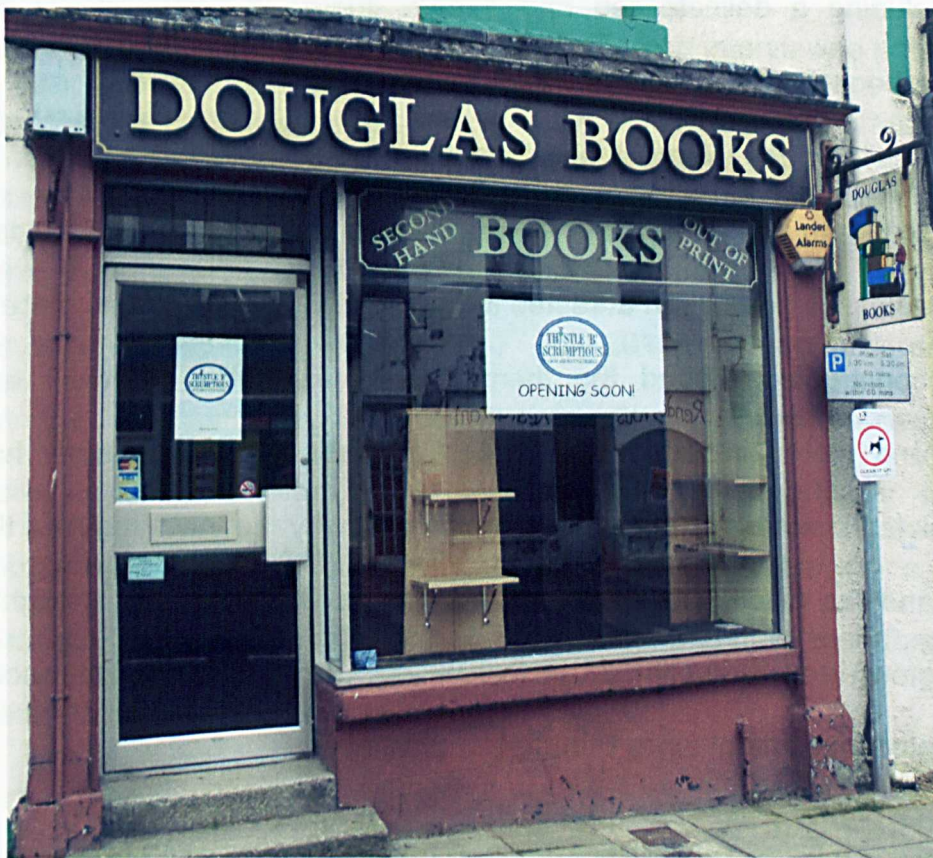
It also must be noted how Dumfries and Galloway Council were influential in this process. It was the council who sold two Georgian properties (former council offices) to the charity. Indeed, the development of The Kirkcudbright Art Gallery is also one of the council's corporate priorities (DGC, 2008). This potentially shows how the council are also actively seeking to develop the Artists' Town brand. However, it must be acknowledged that such support (particularly regarding the WASPS development) has caused some conflict and resentment within the town.

If one looks at this through Bourdieu (1993a) and his notion of the field, this could be interpreted as a struggle for legitimacy, whereby the local authority (as a public institution) are seeking to legitimise and support the Artists' Town, which is being met by opposition from those who potentially do not want such a brand to become legitimate. Such contestations will be explored in the forthcoming chapter.

However, this process of the place brand attracting investment is also evident in the Food Town. This branding has encouraged investment from food-related businesses, including a delicatessen and a café. Figure 6.1 also shows the conversion of a bookshop in Castle Douglas to a delicatessen called 'Thistle 'b' Scrumptious'. This supports Warnock and Laughlin (2006) who note, in relation to Abergavenny, that with its increasing reputation as a 'foodie' destination, new food-related businesses have been attracted to the place. This shows how place is potentially (re)constructed around the theme. However, unlike Wigtown and Kirkcudbright (and more similar to Hay-on-Wye), Castle Douglas already had several food-related businesses in the town, which was why the town acquired the Food Town brand (as discussed). Although the Castle Douglas case is slightly different to Wigtown and Kirkcudbright in this sense, the town has experienced further food-related investment since branding.

However, whilst several businesses in Castle Douglas acknowledged the Food Town brand as a reason for investing in the town, many other (food-related) businesses claimed that their investment had nothing to do with the brand, but because Castle Douglas is a busy market town. This questions the extent to which all place brands potentially reconstruct place, as in Castle Douglas the brand is perceived to be less influential than the Artists' Town brand and the Book Town. In Bourdieu's (1993a) terms, the Food Town brand may not have gained legitimacy

in Castle Douglas to the same extent as the other brands in their respective places. However, it is important to note that all three places have experienced theme-related investment, since the place brands have been created. This supports Kavaratzis (2005) who notes that place brands attract investment that 'fit' and support the place brand. Therefore, despite different governance structures to urban branding developments (and more fragmented governance structures), rural place brands can still be interpreted as attracting particular kinds of investment.



**Figure 6.1:** The former bookshop in Castle Douglas, which is to become a delicatessen (May, 2010)

However, it is also important to acknowledge that the places, the place brands, and the 'materiality' of the brands (i.e. the shops etc) are not static entities, but are constantly evolving. The situation is fraught with periods of flux. For example, whilst the number of bookshops in Wigtown dramatically increased in the early stages of development, the number of bookshops in the town as of 2011 are

slightly fewer. Some of the early booksellers have left the town. However, the town has also attracted new booksellers. The same can be seen in Castle Douglas, where additional food-related businesses may have opened in the town, at the same time, the fishmongers in the town closed. The branding process is therefore constantly evolving, as are the struggles and contestations that such processes evoke (see Bourdieu, 1993a). There is, as such, no overarching coherent development strategy linked to the reconstruction of these places through the brands. The development is much more piecemeal and reliant on the investment from entrepreneurs (often representing small-medium sized enterprises). Therefore, whilst place branding could be interpreted as transforming place, this is contingent on the local context at that particular time, and is a constantly evolving process. This supports Trueman *et al.* (2004) who argue that cities and their brands are constantly changing.

### **6.3 Temporary Transformations – Festivals and Events**

It is also worth acknowledging that the material changes and transformations within the places (e.g. through new shops) are not limited to permanent features. The space within the place is also transformed through festivals and events, as more temporary features. This supports Waterman (1998) who acknowledges the transformational impact that festivals have on spaces and places. These festivals, events and exhibitions are used to reinforce the place brand identity, to put the places on the map and to remind people that these places are still there (see Wigtown Book Town Company, 1997). One respondent noted this in relation to the Book Festival:

I could see that the festival was a way, every year, of generating a colossal amount of publicity, as journalists tend to read books, tend to be interested in writing and most books that come out – particularly if they are new books,

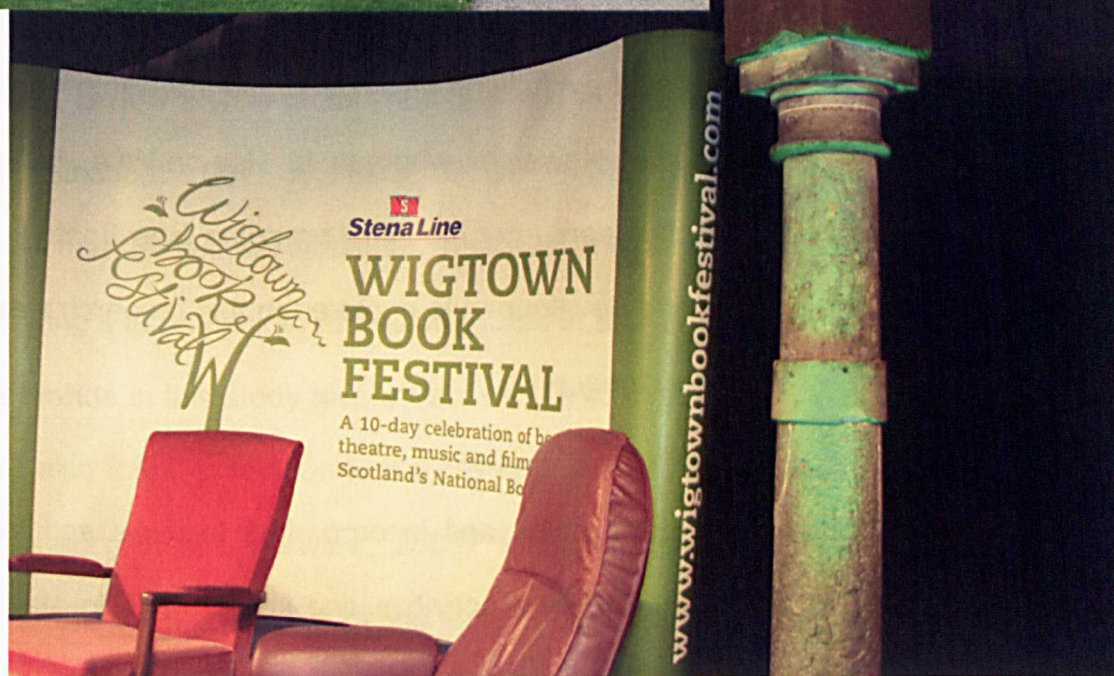
tend to coincide with an anniversary of something, and the book launch itself is a very media driven event, so there is a lot of scope of having news stories with Wigtown involved and Wigtown getting a mention once a year. By having an annual, big coverage in the newspapers, it would continually remind potential visitors that Wigtown was there and was a good place to visit throughout the year. I think it has played a far bigger role in the success of Wigtown as a Book Town, than sometimes people give it credit for. I think the publicity it generates, not only drives visitor numbers during the festival but I think it drives visitor numbers throughout the year because people that don't make the festival and can't come because it is not in the school holidays or whatever will read about it and will come in the summer, because it sounds great, or whatever. So I think it has played a huge role in putting Wigtown on the map (Former Book Festival Director, 11<sup>th</sup> November 2009)

This situation supports Waterman (1998), who notes, in relation to arts festivals, that such festivals develop strong associations with places, which may also assist in defining the place. The festival becomes a tool whereby the place is 'sold' to the outside world (Waterman, 1998). Within Wigtown, the Book Festival not only attracts attention and visitors, and reinforces a particular vision of the place brand identity, but the marquees transform Wigtown (albeit temporarily) and reassert the message that the town is the Book Town. The town gardens are transformed during the festival, to accommodate the main Book Festival marquee (see figure 6.2). Festivals could thus be interpreted as a strategy for legitimising the place brands within the places, and as creating symbolic markers of dominance (see Bourdieu, 1993a) to establish the field (or place) in a particular way.





*Figure 6.2:* The ornamental statue in the town gardens (left) and the same statue incorporated into the stage in the main marquee (below)



Similarly, in Kirkcudbright, the Town Hall becomes the site of Kirkcudbright 2000's summer exhibitions every summer. This not only shows how events can transform space, but also how the place brands themselves have provided a strong impetus for the establishment of various events. This is similar to what Bourdieu (1993a) identifies, in that the establishment of a legitimate culture can reproduce a field (and its agents) in a way that reinforces the legitimate culture of consumption. Such events (like the bookshops, galleries and food outlets) continually reproduce, reinforce and legitimise the place brand in particular ways:

If we could stage this fantastic exhibition, and get loads of visitors, it would prove that Kirkcudbright was worthy of the title – the Artists' Town and worthy of owning a gallery of National significance (Kirkcudbright Forum, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010)

Festivals and events could thus be interpreted as tools for legitimising the place brand within the place. They can be seen as strategies whereby the branding process is reinforced. They promote and raise the profile of the place brands; attract media attention; feature highly in promotional materials; and attract visitors. Indeed, festivals, events and exhibitions have been integral within all three of the place brand developments. However, whereas in Hay-on-Wye, the Hay Book Festival was created many years after the initial branding (see Seaton, 1999), the festivals in the place brand developments explored in this research were seen as integral features from very early on.

With the place brands establishing and incorporating festivals and events, and attracting other related businesses, activities and investments to start up in the towns, this further constructs the places around the themes (permanently and temporarily). However, simultaneously, this process almost further legitimises the place branding – as the place potentially becomes more associated with the brand. The place brand can be interpreted as becoming self-fulfilling and more legitimate. As one interviewee noted, "I think having those galleries in the town... has actually bought validity to the label 'the Artists' Town'" (Artist, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2010). Thus, artistic investment is made in Kirkcudbright: The Artists' Town, which then potentially further strengthens the place branding:

In addition to the direct economic impact of the [WASPS] studios<sup>34</sup> there would also be an intangible positive impact linked to the presence of live professional artists working in the town. This will help to strengthen the artists' town brand and the case for further investment in the town's arts infrastructure (DGC, Resources Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2008: 3)

#### **6.4 Social Transformation**

Through this process, the places appear to become more desirable to individuals with particular tastes and dispositions. This in turn creates "attractive holiday destinations for the more culturally curious visitor" (Hudson, 2005: 19). Thus, "Kirkcudbright is now a well-established destination for visual arts lovers" (Leader Funding Application, 2007). Similarly, Gibson (2002) notes in relation to New South Wales that the cultural industries 'reshape' and 'transform' the identity of the region, allowing it to be packaged and promoted to tourists *and* potential residents. The place brands in this study also attract people to relocate to the place. Such a finding was also found in relation to the development of 'themed distinctiveness' in Yorkshire (see Yorkshire Forward, 2009). Many of the booksellers in Wigtown relocated to the town, because of the Book Town branding. As one bookseller commented, "If the Book Town happened to be in Perthshire, for example, we would have gone there" (Bookseller, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009). This did not only include those who moved to the places in order to open businesses. Through my ethnography, I met a number of individuals who have visited and indeed relocated to Wigtown because it is Scotland's Book Town. Many of these individuals actively participate in Book Town events and other activities (such as local talks; poetry and writing groups and informal scrabble meetings). Indeed, the same was found

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<sup>34</sup> The studios house 17 artists were estimated at generating the sector average turnover of £13,500, contributing a minimum of £55,080 p/a to the Kirkcudbright economy (DGC, Resources Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2008: 3)



in relation to the Artists' Town, where individuals have moved to the town, because of the artists' heritage – and the association with art – or indeed, to occupy the houses of former artists!

One person who, during my fieldwork, had recently bought a second-home in Wigtown commented how he had purchased the house because Wigtown was the Book Town. He is very interested in opening his own bookshop when he retires. He would also like to see other, older people – who are interested in books and literature – to retire to the town. His aspiration for the town is to create a stimulating and cultural community, with like-minded people, around literature (Field Diary, 28<sup>th</sup> September 2009). A similar situation to this was found in Kirkcudbright, where a community has developed around an interest in art.

This emphasises how place can also be re-constructed socially around the brands (not just physically). As one interviewee asserted "it is the middle-classes who are moving to Wigtown now. People who are about to retire, or retiring. The working classes are pushed out" (Anonymous interview, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010). Whilst this is an assertion and a generalisation, Macleod also notes "there has been an influx of new people bringing financial and cultural capital into the town [Wigtown] and region" (2009: 137). Houses prices have thus increased, as has the number of second homes in the town (Field Diary, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2009; Macleod, 2009). This supports Gibson (2002) who found that the creation of 'cultural hotspots' in New South Wales could be associated with an increase in property values, and Seaton (1999) who found a similar association in Hay-on-Wye regarding the development of the Book Town. Bennett and Savani (2003) also note that place brands can often be interpreted as being designed to appeal to high-income and better-educated residents. This situation could be interpreted as a process of

gentrification (see Yorkshire Forward, 2009) associated with the use of culture in developments, and the promotion of particular cultural and lifestyle associations within and through the place brands. As Zukin (1995) and O'Connor and Wynne (1996) note, such processes can actually exclude and marginalize original communities and businesses. Whilst it was acknowledged by some that this means that locals are somewhat priced out of the market (similarly to what Gibson identified), some have indeed benefited from the price increase and have capitalised on the sale of their homes (Field Diary, 20<sup>th</sup> September 2009).

However, this process of the brand attracting new residents is also relevant in the Food Town. An article in Dumfries and Galloway Life (Autumn, 2009) covered the story of an award-winning chef, who has moved to Castle Douglas – the Food Town – and established a personal chef service. In addition to this business, he also works in a hotel near Castle Douglas and mentors school pupils. According to the article, he “hopes to eventually open a small seafood café in Castle Douglas when his sons are older” (2009: 28). The article quotes him as saying “Castle Douglas, the Food Town, is a great area to live in from a chef’s point of view as it has five butcher shops, one of which is the only dedicated pork butcher in Dumfries and Galloway. There are also a number of small businesses providing things like ice-cream, herbs, mushrooms, great fish... almost anything a chef could wish for is on your doorstep” (2009: 28).

Through such a process with individuals with similar interests moving to a place because of the brand, a whole culture can emerge around these interests. In Wigtown, since the Book Town brand, not only have more bookshops emerged, and a successful Book Festival been created, but reading groups have emerged;

Scrabble groups; writing groups; poetry groups and lecture series. Many of those who participate in such activities are the people who have moved to the town (Field Diary, 30<sup>th</sup> October 2009). Indeed, the same can be found in relation to Kirkcudbright. Since the Artists' Town brand, more galleries have emerged and more arts events have emerged, as well as art groups and exhibitions<sup>35</sup>:

Increasingly people are moving to live in this area who have those kinds of values – who want to live in a rural area but also want to be culturally stimulated and take part in cultural activity with others. And the artists town and the book town in particular, and things that spring up around those, like artists studios and the Swallow Theatre, provide the opportunity for that (Bookseller, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2009)

This is a similar finding to Young *et al*'s (2006), with regard to the regeneration of Manchester. They found that the marketing of place attracted particular individuals, who then behaved (performed) in particular ways, which reproduced the marketing image and transformed place. In this sense, the place myth created through the marketing strategy, could then become reality, and one continually reproduced and reinforced.

However, with the transformation of place through branding, we must question the extent this process could be interpreted as a neoliberal colonisation of place – one imbued with complex social and cultural meanings. Arguably, Wigtown has been transformed and has become a Book Town, which has had economic, environmental, cultural and social effects:

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<sup>35</sup> Much less of this process was noted in Castle Douglas. This could be because the Food Town branding has not yet gained as much legitimacy or recognition within place.

The goal of book town, which is an economic development project, is to revitalize the region by developing a local book-based economy with a tourism dimension. Change in the economic base of Wigtown may affect the economic situation of the town's residents, but it also brings about social and cultural changes. Concurrently, these changes affect the multiple meanings of place.... Book town did not develop out of Wigtown's specific history or identity, so one of the project's challenges is to become part of the place. To do this, the project must create a new place identity, a "book town identity", that must be backed by substantial and inclusive changes that locals want, but that also reflects the place and incorporates previous and existing identities of Wigtown. The rise of such a book town identity will indicate both economic success and local acceptance (Wigtown Book Festival, 2001a)

As addressed in the above quote, the brand had to become part of the place. As acknowledged by the former chairman of the Book Town, "as Tony Seaton said in his studies, a Book Town has got to be known as a Book Town and not as any other sort of town" (6<sup>th</sup> October 2009). According to such a comment, Book Town must become dominant over all other place identities. As noted in the Regeneration and Environment newsletter, published by Dumfries and Galloway Council:

A town can really only market itself as a theme town if the theme it wants to employ eclipses other identities the town may have... An authentic heritage and culture linked to the theme helps immeasurably, and the initiative will not work effectively unless there is very active community support for the theme, it has emotional appeal to draw in curious tourists, and is backed up by a strong marketing and product development plan (R&E News, 2005: 4-5)

Such a perspective is well rehearsed within destination marketing, particularly around the concept of 'unique selling proposition'. As Seaton argues:

The success of tourism in book towns demonstrates one of the most crucial laws of destination marketing but one which is still more disregarded than observed – the single concept *unique selling proposition*. This means that destinations are most likely to prosper when they promote clear, single, uniquely differentiated images, which makes their identities different from that of others. This is not to say that a destination cannot provide more than one attraction for the visitor (Hay offers riding, fishing, walking and other historic attractions which help to keep people in the area once they are there) but it will only be known for one thing, and that one, if attractive and unique, will be the critical feature of its tourism identity (Seaton, 1999: 396-397)

This situation can be explored through Bourdieu's (1993a) notion of the field, as a site of struggle, where individuals transform or conserve the field in different ways. Clearly, the establishment of the unique selling proposition, through place branding, is about making that particular aspect of place the dominant and legitimate identity (over others).

### **6.5 Legitimising the Place Brands**

One of the strategies in order to establish the Book Town brand in Wigtown can be seen through the discourse that the brand has been good for the town; it has regenerated Wigtown; and attracted interest and wealth. The vast majority of people whom I spoke to in Wigtown – even if totally disengaged from the Book Town – claimed that it has been the town's saviour:

Welcome to a town built anew on books. While some locals might eye the type of people attracted with suspicion, it is not an exaggeration to say Wigtown was saved by swapping a past defined by the creamery and distillery, to one based on books... (Pattullo, 2009)

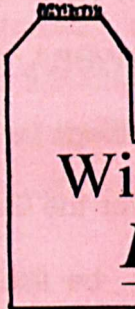
They all acknowledged how Wigtown was rather run-down prior to Book Town and that branding has really improved the town. Thus, because of the material changes within Wigtown, the Book Town development has gained legitimacy within many people's opinions. As mentioned in chapter one, the County Buildings in Wigtown were in a state of disrepair and needed substantial investment and the Book Town was seen as an impetus for funding. The County buildings were closed in 2000 for major repairs and re-opened in 2003 (see WBBA, 2004). As the Development Plan Review acknowledges, the County Buildings in Wigtown were seen to be important in terms of providing venue space for the Book Town and that "implementation of the Book Town initiative would... be likely to give the scheme [of the restoration of the County Buildings] increased priority within the Council's expenditure plans" (SWRC, 1997: 5). The Book Town development was therefore perceived as a development for the good of the town, which encouraged other funding and investment to take place:

The whole process has had a positive 'snowball' effect whereby, without the Book Town concept, significant public sector investment in townscape and property upgradings would not have happened and, in turn, the private sector would not have been encouraged to locate and invest within the town. As a consequence, property values are estimated to have doubled in the last five years, and there is considerably more market interest in buying property in Wigtown" (TMS, 2003: 11)

Posters, such as figure 6.3, reinforce the message that Book Town is improving Wigtown. It is also clear how the Book Town became a political device, to secure public funding and to encourage local people to support those driving the Book Town project. It is therefore rather apparent the different strategies used in order to try and legitimise the Book Town brand as a legitimate culture within the town:



It is Wigtown bookshops that are behind the regeneration of Wigtown. That is the regeneration of Wigtown. That is why other businesses have benefited, because bookshops and booksellers were encouraged to come here. Because people had vision. Without the bookshops and without the book festival, you can close the doors I think on Wigtown, pretty much (Bookseller, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009)



## Wigtown County Building *Everyone's No.1 Priority*

Three Firsts for Wigtown !!!

**For the First Time**

Wigtown is **winning** the battle to refurbish **The County Building**.

In the Bag: £100,000 Euro Money matched by  
£50,000 of Council Money (£50,000 matched funding needed).

**For the First Time**

We have the cards in our hand because **The County Building**  
is the **1st Priority** Building for Scotland's Winning Book Town.

**For the First Time**

The Winning Team comes up for Election  
to the New Style Community Council.

Book Town is changing Wigtown:

**You** are changing Wigtown by **your** support for Book Town:  
Book Town is for **Everybody**.

Please keep our Area's New-found Future on Course:  
Vote for the Winning Team:

**Monday 8 December 1997, Time 5.00 - 8.00 P.M.**  
**at THE COUNTY BUILDING,**  
**Kirkinner Hall, or Whauphill Hall.**

**Back Book Town to finish the County Building job.**  
(probable funding date next April)

**Wigtown Book Town for Scotland**

Figure 6.3: A poster produced by the Book Town committee (ns, 1997)

It was also apparent that children have been the focus for a strategy to legitimise the Book Town brand, through the 'Passport Scheme'. This scheme was developed within the local primary school (with the library service and the regional arts association). The introduction to the Passport explains that it is a "reading incentive scheme that aims to encourage children to engage with books and make use of the library, the Book Town and the wider literary world". The head-teacher who founded the passport commented:

The Passport Scheme is really an attempt to get children to articulate well – not just with the Book Town itself, but the whole world of literature, in its widest sense, from contacting authors, from attending author workshops, even to visiting bookshops and engaging in email correspondence, for example, with a writer in residence, or a literature development officer (Headteacher, Wigtown Primary School, 8<sup>th</sup> October 2009)

It is aimed at children from nursery age to Primary 7 (12 years) and is structured through different levels (which get progressively harder); Bronze (Primary 1, 2 and 3); Silver (Primary 4 and 5) and Gold (Primary 6 and 7). Students receive a stamp in their passport for every activity they complete, including: visiting a bookshop, attending festival events<sup>36</sup>, writing various pieces, engaging with authors; and undertaking research in the library. In addition, children are expected to read a range of books (fiction; non-fiction; Scots; poetry) and are tested by the teacher and their peers. At the end of the year, the children receive badges (adorned with the Wigtown Book Town logo); certificates and those who achieve most receive vouchers to a nearby activity centre. This scheme was designed to not only promote reading (and writing), but to really develop the community into a Book Town:

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<sup>36</sup> Students are given a complimentary ticket to attend a talk



When Book Town arrived first... there was some of the local folks who felt that... Book Town, in a sense, was something that had been done to Wigtown, rather than with Wigtown... It was a bolt on, and some folks saw Wigtown as one community and Book Town as something that sat side by side with that. A lot of local folks did not immediately buy into that. Many did, but a lot didn't. My contention, in thinking this through in the early stages, was that I had a whole school of children who were growing up knowing nothing more than Wigtown and Book Town being one and the same thing. And while many of their parents didn't buy into that concept, the children had no other concept, because they were growing up with the two things. Now my contention was, if I could find a mechanism where children actively worked towards seeing those two things as being quite united, then a) it may help their parents to buy into it and b) certainly, they would not grow up with the kind of attitudes and prejudices that maybe some of their parents had. Now, I think the Passport has been outstandingly successful in achieving that, because the children are hugely involved with the Book Town Festival events, and working in the library for example, involving all sorts of library tasks at all stages, and visiting bookshops and so on. The exciting thing is that as time has gone on, the generation of folks in Wigtown who were possibly reluctant to buy into this at the start, are possibly through their children being involved in the Passport, and certainly because they now see the significant benefits to the town, have themselves brought into it, in a very large sense (Headteacher, Wigtown Primary School, 8<sup>th</sup> October 2009)

This strategy can clearly be seen as a way of establishing the Book Town within Wigtown. It is also rather supportive of Bourdieu's theoretical position, whereby he acknowledges that the education system plays a major role in imposing legitimate modes of consumption (see Bourdieu, 1993a). In Wigtown, the education system is clearly being used to establish not only Book Town as a legitimate aspect of Wigtown, but is also establishing a legitimate culture around reading and literature more broadly.

Thus, it is rather apparent that the Book Town brand is not only being used as a strategy of local economic development, but also to foster a community that is interested in books and literature. As the former Book Town chairman noted, "We were insistent that we included children into the Book Town culture" (Former Book Town Chairman, 6<sup>th</sup> October 2009). This quote almost implies some form of desire to assimilate children into a particular type of culture. This could be seen as a strategy for the establishment of a legitimate culture within the place. It is clearly bound with ideas about what cultural practices and dispositions individuals should have. The quote below, from a Wigtown bookseller, clearly argues that people (and especially children) should be engaging with the world of literature – and also with the spaces of the bookshop:

The problem is, in this town... They don't want to read. They don't encourage their kids to read... The kids should be brought up to think this [bookshop] is our source of knowledge. The books in here will widen your knowledge. It is important to you... That book may be the opening of a whole new horizon for the child... Very rarely do I get parents coming in with the kids. They should be brought up to be well versed to going around bookshops... It would be more helpful if the people in the town were more bookish... (Bookseller, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009).

The Creative Education team of the local authority (CREATE) also work in partnership with Wigtown Book Festival and bring all of the school children from across Dumfries and Galloway to specifically devised sessions at the festival. The children meet authors, and are encouraged to return to the Book Town with their parents<sup>37</sup>. The purpose of this is to promote access to cultural opportunities; to

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<sup>37</sup> Through my ethnography, I volunteered at these events

promote literature; and to stimulate a younger audience at the Book Festival events:

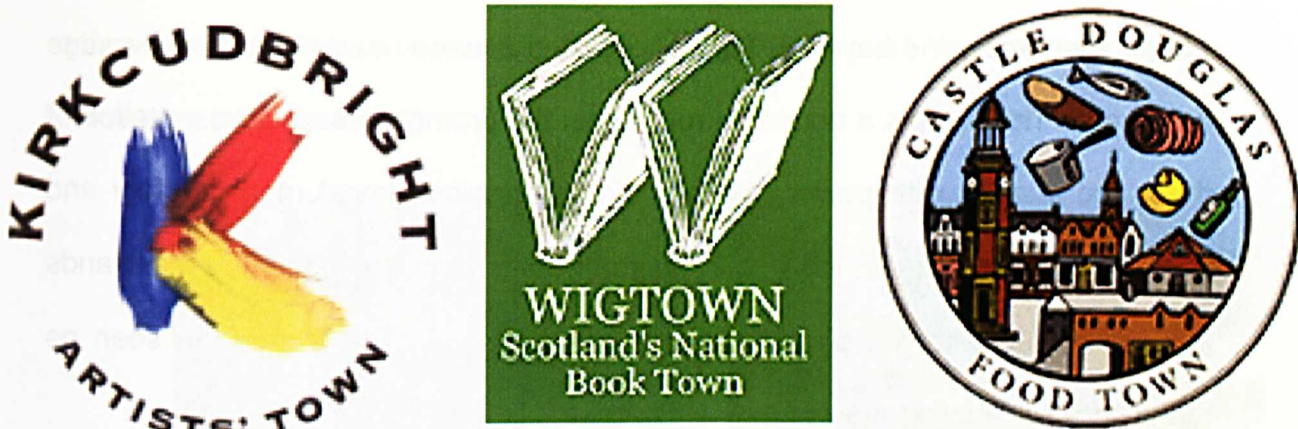
The remit of our job was to open the gates and access and opportunities for schools and pupils and teaching staff to access cultural opportunities... Literature, English, wider literacy are all supported by the rich programme you have at Wigtown Book Town Festival... I know in previous years... something like 2% of the visitors to Wigtown Book Town Festival were under 25... For me, that wasn't a very good statistic... lets get all the children there, and hopefully what they will do is come back at the weekends. That is everything I kept reiterating at the festival – 'are you coming back? Are you going to bring your parents?' You want them to make that decision to go on their own (CREATE, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009)

Whilst children also receive attention from the other two towns (notably the Food Town, through cooking competitions etc), there are no explicit mechanisms, such as the Passport scheme, to reinforce the place brand within place. This again alludes to differences in the way place brands are established.

This struggle for the branding to become this legitimate feature of place was not solely experienced in the Book Town. According to the Food Town business plan, it is perceived as essential that the Food Town message becomes dominant within the town – that Food Town should become the unique selling proposition of Castle Douglas:

It is imperative that the home of the brand, the town itself, should highlight the food town message at every turn. Visitors (and for that matter local people too) should be exposed to the brand imagery repeatedly and consistently, through a variety of media, whilst they are in the town (Warnock and Laughlin, 2006: 26)

One way in which all of the place brands in Dumfries and Galloway have strived to legitimise the place brands and embed them within place is through the use of a brand logo (see figure 6.4). Such devices reinforce the identity of the place brands and act as symbolic markers and emblems of a culture seeking legitimacy within place.



*Figure 6.4:* The logos associated with the place brands

Such logos are displayed not only on promotional materials, but also on window stickers in shops, on shop signs and on flags and banners around the towns (see figure 6.5). This makes me question why such mechanisms are used. According to two respondents in Kirkcudbright:

The idea was that the Artists' Town branding and the K was something that would be used by everyone and everybody in Kirkcudbright. Any commercial enterprise should have that K logo on, because this indicates it is Kirkcudbright. Only by use of a brand and getting it out there and familiar does it have a purpose...every organisation in Kirkcudbright should ideally be using that logo (Kirkcudbright Forum, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010)

We are very keen that everybody uses the term Artists' Town... That was the idea – to try and get people all using the same very visible K branding,



identifying themselves as being part of Kirkcudbright (Museums Curator, DGC, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2010)

The above quotes emphasise the use of logos to reinforce the identity of the place brands. It is also clear how they are designed to encourage people to show their allegiance and belonging to place. The use of logos, banners and flags not only shows allegiance and buy-in to the concept, but is used to reinforce the message and brand. This adopts a dominant role within the promotion and representation of the place. Linked with power, the branding strategies almost mark territory and ownership. In this sense, there is a desire to make sure the logos and the brands are associated with the places. As branding strategies, they could be seen as markers of neoliberal colonisation.

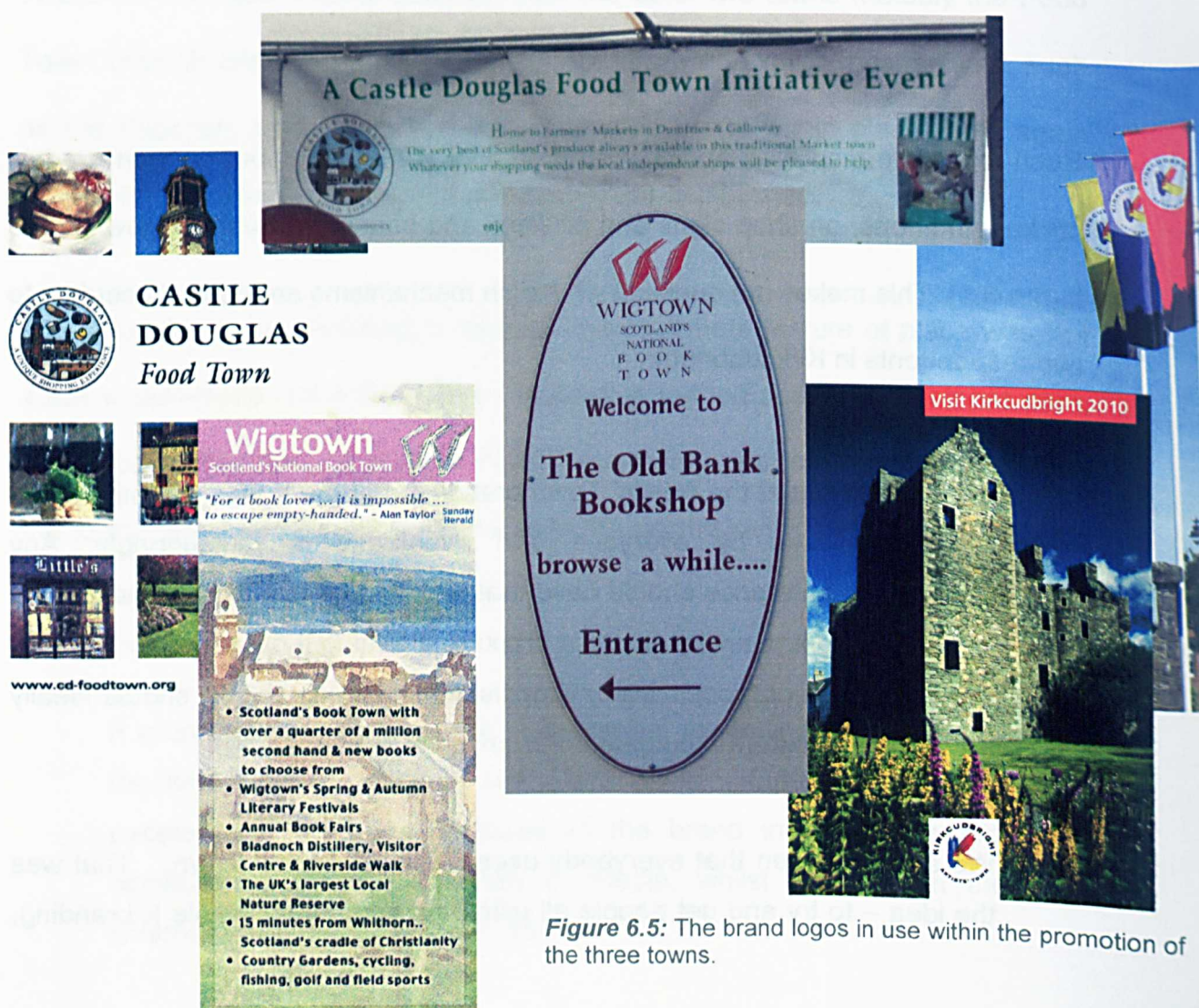


Figure 6.5: The brand logos in use within the promotion of the three towns.



However, it is not just the visual logos that construct the places in particular ways, but the actual wording of the brands. The brands and the places became synonymous. For example, the Book Town equals Wigtown and vice versa. In relation to Wigtown, one respondent commented, “It is not Wigtown, it is Scotland’s Book Town” (D&G Councillor, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2010). Such notions are not only reinforced through various discourses, but also through the entrance signs to the places (see figure 6.6).



Figure 6.6: The place brand signs clearly adorn the entrances to the theme towns.

However, it is important to acknowledge that the extent to which a place is reconstructed around a place brand is associated with how dominant, legitimate and embedded that brand becomes in place. For example, within Dumfries and Galloway, the Food Town was perceived to be the weakest of the place brands, in terms of the branding and the actual material place product<sup>38</sup>. The construction of

<sup>38</sup> This was a common discourse amongst many individuals I spoke to

Castle Douglas as a Food Town, as a result of the place brand, has therefore occurred to a much less extent than is the case in Wigtown. However, of course we must acknowledge that Wigtown as a Book Town has existed slightly longer, and therefore may be linked to the stage of development. The way in which the place is represented symbolically – and the actual lived materiality of the place (either what is existing already, or which is created as a result of the branding) – will also affect the way in which the place develops.

Of course, the extent to which the place brands have become legitimate (dominant) cultures within the three towns (and the 'unique selling point') is questionable – and will be examined more critically in the following chapter. However, what is clear, regardless of how legitimate and dominant the place brands appear to have become, there are also various contestations about exactly how place should be represented, as there are individuals in all three of the towns who challenge the place brand identity. Therefore, the extent to which the brand becomes the 'unique selling point' (and the processes involved in this endeavour) is extremely contentious. This section has noted the ways in which the places have been transformed through branding, and the strategies used to reinforce such notions. The theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu is useful in exploring the contestations within this branding process – particularly through his notions of the field and the struggle for legitimacy.

## **6.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has argued that the place brands in this research have (re)constructed and transformed places in particular ways – both materially and symbolically. It supports research by Gibson (2002) in acknowledging that the use of culture can transform places, but this chapter shows that through place brands

around culture, places are transformed in a variety of ways. There are material transformations within places linked to the brands (e.g. more bookshops; more art galleries etc) (which supports Seaton, 1999), and also temporary material transformations (e.g. festivals), which reinforce and legitimise the place brand in particular ways (which supports Waterman, 1998). In addition, there are social transformations linked to the branding (e.g. attracting new residents) and also symbolic transformations (as place is 'sold' to potential investors in particular ways etc). Therefore, the place brands have attracted additional investment to these places; and attracted visitors and new residents, which continues to reinforce the brand identity. Through examining the ways in which places have been transformed through branding, the chapter noted that the extent of such transformation varies between the cases. All places have attracted associated and theme-related investments, which supports Kavaratzis (2005), despite the governance of the place brands being more fragmented than that in urban areas. Therefore, even rural place brands could be seen as relatively effective strategies for implicitly managing places, as Kavaratzis (2005) argues is the case within branding. However, this chapter has also acknowledged that the brands, and the materiality of the brand (e.g. associated shops etc) are constantly changing, and are not static (which supports Trueman *et al.*, 2004).

As it is argued that the brands must become dominant within place, and should be seen as the unique selling proposition (see Seaton, 1999), the chapter also noted several strategies for legitimising and reinforcing the place brands within the places. These not only included developing the actual materiality of the place (e.g. more bookshops etc); but through festivals; logos, flags and banners; educational initiatives (e.g. Passport Scheme); and the promotion of various discourses (e.g. that the brands are good for the towns). However, despite the places experiencing



various transformations since branding, the extent to which the brands can be seen to be the unique selling proposition of place (or the dominant identity) is questionable, as the branding process is an extremely contentious one. Such contestations and struggles within the branding process will be critically explored in the next chapter.

## **Chapter Seven: What are the Struggles and Contestations in Place Brand Development?**

The previous chapter discussed how the place brands have transformed places around the brand. Since the branding, places have attracted more investment (e.g. more bookshops), related festivals and events and even new residents. In this sense, the place brands could be seen as part of the process of forming the dominant identities of those places. Indeed, Seaton (1999) notes that such identities must become dominant if they are to succeed. However, this process is extremely contested, as the place becomes a site of struggle, whereby the legitimacy of the brand is questioned, and other aspects of place compete for recognition. In addition to these struggles over establishing the brand as the dominant identity within the place, there are also struggles more specifically within the establishment of the brand. Whereas Kavaratzis (2005) argues that place branding portrays a clear, coherent and holistic identity, this chapter argues that, in practice, rural place brands are much more fragmented, rather than coherent. This may be due to the governance structures discussed in chapter five, whereby these small place developments are not centrally controlled, but are much more dispersed and piecemeal in nature.

The struggles and contestations within the branding process can be interpreted through Bourdieu's notion of the field. The field is a site of struggle and contestation, where individuals compete for dominance (Painter, 2000; Grenfell, 2004) and where conflicts take place over different values, views, 'cultures' and differences in habitus (Bourdieu, 1984). With the fragmented nature of the place brands (and fragmented understandings of place), this chapter argues that individuals seek to preserve or transform the field (the place, and the brand) in different ways. By promoting their own vision over others, there is what Bourdieu

terms 'a struggle for legitimacy', whereby different actors compete to make their own visions, tastes and practices the legitimate culture.

### **7.1 Place as Site of Contestation**

It has been widely discussed in the place marketing literature that the reimagining and marketing of a place is a contested process, as place means different things to different people (see Gertner and Kotler, 2004). It has also been argued that the marketing strategies can also leave local people feeling rather excluded from the image that is portrayed of the place (see Waitt, 1999; Gibson, 2005; Boyle and Hughes, 1991). The current research findings support these pieces of research. As noted in relation to Kirkcudbright:

For people who haven't grown up particularly involved in art and seen it evolving and taking over... They feel they are losing their identity as quite a strong fishing port as it was, and it is art that is strongly branded there (Leisure Officer, D&G Council, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

However, this chapter argues that, whilst the place brands are developed and gain legitimacy within place, other actors who have alternative visions, seek to challenge the legitimacy of such brands, and transform the field (the place) in different ways. Such contestations and struggles within the branding and marketing process can be interpreted through Bourdieu's analysis of the field. The branding process thereby becomes a site of contestation, with struggles against the establishment of the place brands as the legitimate identity of place, as other aspects of place compete for legitimacy:

Around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Kirkcudbright was home to a group of notable artists but its recent re-branding as the Artists' Town has raised some eyebrows among its inhabitants, and the feeling is that Kirkcudbright

is so much more and the label eclipses the diversity, the terrific energy even the courage of those whose lives shaped the town we see today (DGB Life, June/July 2008: 33)

Similarly to that identified in Kirkcudbright, in Wigtown, where it is interpreted by many as Scotland's Book Town, for others, Book Town is not part of their association with Wigtown. Wigtown therefore means different things to different individuals and communities, simultaneously. The place is, in essence, more than the brand! The idea that a place brand conveys a holistic, whole-place narrative, as Kavaratzis (2004) argued, is therefore rather problematic. Through such multiplicity of place, it is clear that there is a struggle of legitimacy over different narratives and identities of place:

If you get into these discussions with any of the groups involved in this, they often argue until they are [red] in the face, about what is the best thing about Galloway. They say 'it's this – we have great heritage, we should be selling our heritage', and then somebody else will say 'yes, but nobody tells you about the great scenery we have got, shall we market that?' 'Yes, but nobody tells you about the books. They should be telling us about the books'. Then you get someone saying 'what about biking? Why don't we have biking in there?. There is always, I find... this conflict around what do you present as the unique selling point. (Anonymous interview, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010)

The construction of the 'unique selling point' of a place (or the place brand) is therefore inherently bound with issues of power and conflicts of interests. The establishment of a place brand as the legitimate culture of a place is likely to be challenged. Within Castle Douglas, there are a range of different businesses and shops – not all of them are food-related. The Food Town brand has been a rather contested issue, from many of those businesses (and some food-related

businesses), who seek a place brand that encompasses the town's variety (Warnock and Laughlin, 2006). One interviewee noted the move to broaden the Food Town brand to include 'The Unique Shopping Experience' as a sub-brand. He acknowledged the whole variety of other (non-food) shops in Castle Douglas and that "they all felt excluded [by the brand]" (Food Town Treasurer, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2010). This creates a situation fraught with cultural politics. As Warnock and Laughlin (2006) warned, focusing on food and drink industries can alienate other industries and a wider market. Certainly, through my ethnography, this became clearly apparent, as the support for the Food Town brand was questionable at best.

Such challenges are not solely the case in Castle Douglas. As the former chairman of the Book Town noted, "There was scepticism and a lot of the old business people were concerned that with all the bookshops, they were forcing out other businesses" (Former Book Town Chairman, 6<sup>th</sup> October 2009). There was a feeling that the Book Town was becoming dominant in the place, which was challenged by others. Such a finding supports Frenkel and Walton (2000) and Paradis (2002) who explored the development of theme towns in the USA. Both pieces of research found that scepticism and a feeling that the brands had taken over the place surrounded the theme towns. This implies a more generic issue related to the development of place brands, not only in the USA, but also the UK. Similarly, according to minutes from the Kirkcudbright Chamber of Commerce (18<sup>th</sup> September 2006), one business owner "thought that attractions other than the Artists' Town should be brought to the attention of visitors through marketing". This indicates that there is a struggle for legitimacy within the branding process, whereby other actors seek to challenge the legitimacy and dominance of the place brand within place, by promoting other aspects. As a Kirkcudbright resident

commented “The local community and the fishermen are a bit pissed off at the whole Artists’ Town. To them, it is a fishing town – or that is its history also, and that is not mentioned” (Anonymous interview, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2010). This quote implies that the Artists’ Town brand is becoming the dominant aspect of place, which is marginalizing other aspects. It is clear that there is disquiet and contestation regarding the way in which the brand is becoming the dominant feature of Kirkcudbright. The legitimacy of the brand is therefore challenged. The extent of this struggle differs between places over time and between individuals.

On an historical walk around Kirkcudbright, as part of the summer festivities, a local historian questioned whether Kirkcudbright is an Artists’ Town with a fishing heritage, or a Fishing Town with an artists’ heritage (Field Diary, 13<sup>th</sup> July 2010). Indeed, some view Kirkcudbright as an Artists’ Town, whilst others do not. The place brands therefore become dominant in some people’s imaginaries (although of course, not all). This acknowledges that individuals relate to ‘legitimate culture’ in different ways – depending on their own position, tastes and dispositions (see Bourdieu, 1984). As one article in ‘Dumfries, Galloway and Borders Life’ comments “The first and foremost thing about Wigtown is that it’s Scotland’s Book Town” (Fraser, April/May 2008: 22). Of course, others will see Wigtown differently: whether this is through historical associations of the place (e.g. Martyrs stake), or through other practices and identities (such as regarding wildfowling). For these individuals, their ‘legitimate culture’ may not only relate to their own respective practices (e.g. wildfowling), but their relationship to the Book Town, and their imaginaries of Wigtown, are also likely to differ. Legitimate culture is, therefore, a fragmented concept, which is relational, yet contingent on one’s position.

In relation to the regeneration of Manchester, Young *et al.* (2006) found that place marketing created a 'legitimate culture' around development, which reproduced places in particular ways (for particular audiences), which then marginalize and exclude those aspects that do not 'fit'. Whilst elements of this can be seen through the process of place branding in this research, the 'other' aspects of the places – outwith the brands – still function within the places and attract their own audiences. Indeed, they still compete for recognition. Thus, not all promotional material of the towns – or indeed an individual's association – is solely related to the place branding. Other aspects of the place may feature more heavily in other avenues (e.g. in a newsletter to birdwatchers promoting the Local Nature Reserve), which may appeal to individuals with different tastes and dispositions. This actually questions Paradis' (2002) finding that the development of theme towns can actually 'hide' other notions of place. Other aspects of place are therefore not necessarily marginalized through place branding. In this sense, the place brand (e.g. Artists' Town) just becomes one aspect of the town, which is separate to other aspects. They become parallel communities within the place, which are competing for legitimacy and dominance. This raises the issue of temporality, in the sense that what is perceived as the legitimate culture will differ over time (see Bourdieu, 1993a). However, it also questions whether there is only one legitimate culture at a time (in a hierarchical, position-taking structure), as Bourdieu (1993a) suggests, or whether there are multiple cultures all seeking legitimacy and recognition simultaneously, from potentially different audiences, with different dispositions and tastes. In this sense, potentially multiple legitimate cultures, co-existing simultaneously.

Despite this multiplicity and co-existence of many place identities, it is also clear that branding and marketing strategies – that seek to promote a holistic identity

and whole-place narrative (see Kavaratzis, 2005) – encourage somewhat of a struggle over the preservation and transformation of place. There are actors that seek to transform the place into an Artists' Town (or Book Town, or Food Town), and those which seek to promote (or conserve) over notions (such as the fishing heritage). There is, in essence, a struggle for legitimacy (within the field) over how that field (or place) is interpreted, and indeed, packaged, marketed and branded. However, the field, as a site of struggles, is subject to permanent contestation, as different aspects of the field are in competition with each other for legitimacy. Some aspects will become more dominant and legitimate over others (and will feature more strongly in the marketing strategies of place), which is then subject to further contestation, as other aspects seek dominance over that (see Bourdieu, 1993a). With such a continual process, it is therefore apparent why the place brands and their development are still contested issues, several years after their initial creation. This continual struggle for legitimacy and of 'position-taking' within the field is rather apparent (see Bourdieu, 1993a).

The place brands therefore do not necessarily become the dominant identity of place, for everyone, as Seaton (1999) argues. It is also questionable whether the place brand conveys a holistic, whole-place narrative, as Kavaratzis (2004) argued. Rather, it becomes one part of the place, which may acquire more legitimacy and dominance in some imaginaries than others. In this sense, the branding and marketing cannot be seen to over-simplify place, as Waitt (1999) argued, as the other aspects of place still exist outwith the brand, and indeed, are more dominant in some imaginaries than that of the branding.



## **7.2 Place Brand as Site of Contestation**

In addition to the contestations around the legitimacy of the brand within the place (as discussed), there are also numerous internal struggles and contestations within the establishment of the brand more specifically. Arvidsson (2005) argues that branding creates an 'ethical surplus' (i.e. a shared experience; a common identity) and it is argued that place branding creates a clear and coherent identity for place (see Kavaratzis, 2005: 334; Freire, 2005; Rainisto, 2003: 3). However, this section argues that the rural place brands explored in this research are not coherent, but are actually extremely fragmented and fractured. The brands can be interpreted through Bourdieu's notion of the field, and there are a variety of different struggles and contestations between different fragments of the place brands – as they compete for dominance, legitimacy and recognition with the brand. Although the brands could be seen to evoke a sense of a common identity (in that different actors and organisations seek to promote the branding), it is clear that the different fragments of the place brands actually promote different experiences. What this section hopes to exemplify is that rural place brands are fragmented, and are the site of struggles and contestations, as different actors seek to portray the brand and the associated experiences in different ways – thus questioning the understanding that the brands create a coherent or shared identity (see Arvidsson, 2005; Kavaratzis, 2005).

## **7.3 Kirkcudbright Artists' Town**

Art is a deeply complex field, with various distinctions and various struggles for legitimacy (see Bourdieu, 1984). Such contestations and struggles are also present within the Artists' Town brand. What is most interesting is that there is not a single struggle for a legitimate culture, but a variety of different struggles and different markers of distinction. There are thus various struggles for legitimacy

within the Artists' Town brand. Such struggles can be best explored through the Kirkcudbright 2000 summer exhibitions (and art gallery project) and the Kirkcudbright Arts and Crafts Trail. Whilst both of these events are constitutionally separate from the actual place brand, they support and reinforce the brand in different and competing ways.

#### ***7.4 Kirkcudbright Summer Exhibitions***

Kirkcudbright 2000 has hosted an art exhibition in the Town Hall, every summer since 2000 (except 2001) for an eight-week period. Kirkcudbright 2000's patron, Lord Baron Macfarlane of Bearsden, who is extremely well connected in the art world, provides access to various art collections. He is a former trustee of the National Galleries of Scotland; former member of the Royal Fine Art Commission for Scotland and was heavily involved in the fund-raising for the Kelvingrove Art Gallery (Glasgow) redevelopment. He is also a Knight of the Thistle and has been governor of Glasgow School of Art and president of Royal Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts, not mentioning his commercial accomplishments. As one interviewee recalls, "Through him... we established contacts that we would never have done. Particularly with the National Galleries of Scotland" (Anonymous interview, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010).

As a consequence, exhibitions have been staged from a variety of different collections, and indeed, private individuals. Kirkcudbright 2000 has exhibited work by Monet and the Impressionists (from Kelvingrove Art Gallery), it has exhibited collections from the National Galleries of Scotland, the city of Dundee and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. Most of the exhibitions have concentrated on paintings, although the Glasgow Girls exhibition (2010) did also have pieces of

jewellery and pottery<sup>39</sup>. Not only are the pieces of art themselves of worth, but also the status gained from connections with prestigious art institutions (and notable figures) add to the legitimacy and status of the exhibitions. Under Lord Macfarlane's patronage, and through partnership with Dumfries and Galloway Council, Kirkcudbright 2000 strives to ensure top-quality exhibitions are shown within the Artists' Town<sup>40</sup>:

Kirkcudbright 2000 has got to put at the foremost of its mind, that everything we do has got to have the accolade of excellence... Some of it a lot better than others – I know that, but there has never been anything other than good professional art...It is maybe being a wee bit outspoken, but there is no artist of any national renown working or living in Kirkcudbright anymore. When I was young, there would be a dozen of them who were really top line, quality artists. There are one or two who I think are better than others, but I wouldn't hesitate to say that the real *raison d'être* for the name Kirkcudbright – the Artists' Town – comes from our exhibitions, bringing in Rayburn and Larvoury and Hornel and Henry from out of the district – Guthrie and all these people, who are the really good artists, and remind everyone just how good they were. It is also an educational thing (Anonymous interview, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

The above quote indicates that these exhibitions are intended to be of a very high calibre, emphasising the 'accolade of excellence' that is strived for within these exhibitions. It emphasises that the Kirkcudbright 2000 exhibitions stage 'good professional art' and bring in 'really good artists', which he felt were lacking in current day Kirkcudbright. This is not only a judgement of taste, but clearly acknowledges a certain hierarchy of distinction – based on good quality, professional art. There is an act of symbolic violence here, as the artists of

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<sup>39</sup> As acknowledged by the chairman of Kirkcudbright 2000 (28<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

<sup>40</sup> According to representatives of Kirkcudbright 2000

contemporary Kirkcudbright were not seen to be worthy enough of recognition. Indeed, the struggle for legitimate culture within the place brand, evident through Kirkcudbright 2000 and the summer exhibitions, places legitimacy on the artistic heritage of Kirkcudbright, and of nationally acclaimed artists whose work is exhibited in prestigious institutions. This same discourse is expressed through a press release for the 2009 'Home Again' exhibition:

The Kirkcudbright 2000 group have been responsible for organising and presenting the nationally acclaimed annual summer art exhibitions in Kirkcudbright Town Hall. The paintings on display next summer will be by the town's most famous artists from the past 150 years or so and will feature such luminaries as Hornel, Henry, MacGeorge, the Faeds, Oppenheimer, Clarke, Mouncey, and many others (DGC, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2008)

This emphasises the 'nationally acclaimed' status of the exhibitions and that work of the 'town's most famous artists' will be staged. Figure 7.1 - which is a poster for the 'Home Again' exhibition – not only situates the exhibition firmly within the Artists' Town branding (through displaying the logo), but also portrays social and cultural distinction, through the typeface of the text and the imagery of the poster. The prioritisation of the arts heritage of the town is also important to acknowledge – as there appears to be status attached to such heritage (and indeed, the consumption of such heritage). This potentially adds authenticity to the whole branding and to the experience and lived practice of visiting the Artists' Town.



# HOME AGAIN

Kirkcudbright - an Artists' Colony



*An exhibition of paintings by Artists associated with Kirkcudbright  
from the late 19th Century, assembled from public and private collections*

**at the Town Hall, St Mary Street, Kirkcudbright  
July 4th - August 31st, 10am - 6pm • Admission FREE**



**Figure 7.1:** The 2009 exhibition: 'Home Again'

The artists' heritage of Kirkcudbright – and the celebration of 'renowned' and 'established' painters from a bygone era – seems to add a form of legitimacy to the art exhibited. It is portrayed as 'the' important feature of the Artists' Town, or "the real raison d'être for the name Kirkcudbright – the Artists' Town" (Anonymous interview, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010). Indeed, this individual also asserts that such an artistic heritage has made Kirkcudbright one of the most important artistic centres of Scottish art. He claims, "Everyone who is interested in art, knows that as far as Scottish art is concerned, Kirkcudbright is, if not the most important centre – it was

certainly one of the two most important centres” (Anonymous interview, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010). However, by emphasising the artistic heritage as the legitimate culture of the place brand, a cultural politics emerges regarding contemporary art practices, and its position in the brand:

I think some people expected Artists' Town – the term Artists' Town to imply that you would have artists working on street corners. A very strong contemporary scene. Not the case. It was very much the past that we were flagging up (Museums Curator, D&G Council, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2010)

This politics of heritage versus the contemporary is particularly evident through Kirkcudbright 2000's campaign for a permanent art gallery in the town, celebrating the artistic heritage of Kirkcudbright. As acknowledged by Neilson, “There is a constant tension between honouring work of famous artists and giving sufficient exposure to living ones. The campaign for a permanent art gallery in the town has sparked mixed feelings among practicing artists, who point out that the Hornels, Mouncey's, Blacklocks and Kings and Oppenheimers weren't always household names, but were simply artists struggling to make a living” (n.s., n.d: 190). As one artist commented:

Initially when Kirkcudbright became the Artists' Town, I did always feel it was – as I have quipped several times, ‘dead artists’ town and much more to do with the heritage of – and history of art in Kirkcudbright, and not with supporting contemporary artists (Artist, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

Questioning one professional artist about their vision of what an Artists' Town should be, it was felt that it should be about practising, contemporary artists –

rather than the heritage of artists from a by-gone era. At the news of the WASPS<sup>41</sup> artists studios opening, the respondent was extremely positive and acknowledged that that development reinforces her own vision of what the Artists' Town should be all about, but commented "I would acknowledge that that is probably very different from a lot of other people's visions about how they would like the Artists' Town to exist" (Artist, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2010).

Various struggles of culture can be seen within this. Not only is there a struggle for legitimacy over the artistic heritage of place (as seen through Kirkcudbright 2000), but there is also a struggle by contemporary artists to gain recognition within the place brand. Of course, this ultimately affects the development and shape of the Artists' Town brand, which is the site and subject of such contestations. However, the contestations are much more complex than just a struggle between the artistic heritage and contemporary artists. There is an additional level or hierarchy of distinction and contestation, as contemporary 'professional' artists are distinguished from 'amateur' artists:

I just wanted people to be aware of the fact that they were basing it [the Artists' Town brand] on the dead artists. If they were basing it on the Sunday painters, I didn't think there was any validity in calling it the Artists' Town, because the quality of the art was not good...There are a lot of amateur artists based around the town. A lot of not very good quality exhibitions put on... as a professional artist, you have always got that slight friction between what you do and what is going on in the amateur side of things (Artist, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

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<sup>41</sup> WASPS (Workshop and Artists' Studio Provision Scotland Ltd) is a charity which provides affordable studio space to artists in Scotland and claims to be one of 'Scotland's largest arts organisations' (WASPS, 2010).

The branding of the Artists' Town is therefore a contested process, as there are a variety of struggles over what the Artists' Town means and refers to, and which aspects of 'art' are given recognition. The artistic heritage of Kirkcudbright is seen as the legitimate culture of the Artists' Town brand by some, at the same time as the contemporary art being seen as adding legitimacy to the Artists' Town brand by others. There is a struggle for dominance and recognition by both sets of actors. Yet simultaneously, within these contestations, is a further distinction between 'professional' and 'amateur' contemporary artists – with the former being seen to have more legitimacy within the place brand than the latter. This is best explored through the Kirkcudbright Arts and Crafts Trail. Such struggles over the legitimacy of culture and of particular practices supports Bourdieu's (1984) work to some extent – acknowledging the contestations between different cultural practices and how aspects of culture acquire more symbolic worth and value than others. However, the 'legitimate culture' is much more fractured and fragmented than Bourdieu (1984) implies, as individuals relate differently to different aspects of culture, based on their own dispositions (see Bennett et al, 2009). What one sees as good, will not necessarily be seen in the same way by others (see Waterman, 1998). Needless to emphasise that this is extremely problematic when it comes to developing a 'clear' and 'coherent' place brand (see Kavaratzis, 2005), and which symbolically communicates particular lifestyle and taste connotations (see Arvidsson, 2005). These rather diverse aspects of the Artists' Town brand symbolically communicate rather different messages and taste connotations.

### ***7.5 Kirkcudbright Arts and Crafts Trail***

In rather stark contrast to the Kirkcudbright 2000 summer exhibitions, the Artists' Town hosts the Kirkcudbright Arts and Crafts Trail. Rather than exhibiting acclaimed work (notably paintings) from prestigious institutions (such as National



Galleries of Scotland), the trail is much more focused on contemporary art – and art more likely to be defined as ‘amateur’<sup>42</sup>. The Trail was started in 2003 – a few years after the place branding – by a few volunteers who wanted to do something to promote the contemporary art scene in the town, which was perceived to be rather neglected in the branding.

The Arts and Crafts Trail is an open studio event, and is open to anybody who wishes to exhibit. There are no selection criteria. As such, the definition of arts and crafts in the trail is extremely wide, all encompassing and inclusive. As one of the organisers commented, “We don’t refuse anybody wanting to take part” (Arts and Crafts Trail, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2010). In addition to paintings, the event also includes woodwork, textiles, mosaic, gardening, cookery and baking amongst many other art forms. As a trail, the venues are located all over the town (and in some communal places, such as church halls, for those who do not have an accessible space to exhibit). This event is in contrast to the pieces of work exhibited in the Kirkcudbright 2000 summer exhibitions.

During the Arts and Crafts Trail, one can experience street art and performers (see figure 7.2). One can participate in creating some ‘washing line art’ or make a peg doll. You can watch a demonstration of woodturning, or add to a painting on a large canvas. This is a rather different experience of the Artists’ Town branding, to that promoted by Kirkcudbright 2000.

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<sup>42</sup> However, of course, the distinction between ‘professional’ and ‘amateur’ art is a contested one. I am merely adopting the categorisations used by respondents in this research, rather than defining work as ‘professional’ or ‘amateur’ myself.



**Figure 7.2:** Photographs from the Arts and Crafts Trail 2010. Top Left: myself with an installation sculpture. Top Right: One of the venues – art installation in someone's garden. Bottom Left: Woodturning demonstration at venue 16. Bottom Right: An artist painting in the street

What the place brand represents – and the experiences and lifestyle connotations it promotes – is therefore rather fragmented and fractured. This challenges Arvidsson's (2005) notion that brands convey a shared experience and a common identity. However, the place brand is not just fragmented, but it is the site of struggle, as different aspects of the brand compete for recognition and legitimacy. Through this, different values and worth are ascribed to different aspects of the brand, by a variety of different actors. As such, opinions about different aspects

are rather divisive. Whilst some feel the Arts and Crafts Trail is a superb event that is fun, exciting and creative, others do not ascribe the same legitimacy to it:

We have had some opposition [towards the Arts and Crafts Trail]. To be fair, there are some people who have criticised us... They say it isn't professional. I think we get the impression that they are a bit precious about art and what they think is art (Arts and Crafts Trail, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2010)

The above quote alludes to a distinction within the art world, and about some form of hierarchy between professional art and amateur art as played out within the Artists' Town:

If you go on the Arts and Craft Trail – which is primarily and very firmly in the amateur art end – not wholly but mostly that... it is very much Sunday Painters plus a little bit else. If you removed those people out of the equation, there isn't that many artists – not that many – in Kirkcudbright. It isn't any more special than anywhere else... If you look at the Arts and Craft Trail, it is not to my taste at all – I have to be blunt, I just didn't like most of it – but that is a personal thing, and I can back it up with 30 years of – starting with a fine art degree and a diploma in picture conservation and museum experience and this that and the other (Artist, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2010)

The above quote almost implies that 'Sunday painters' cannot be seen as artists, in the 'proper' sense of the term. The term 'Sunday painters' is also one imbued with a particular meaning, as it implies amateurism. The individual also undertakes an act of symbolic violence by alluding to his experiences and qualifications, which downplays the art in the trail – and the legitimacy of this, in the Artists' Town brand. Supporting this interpretation, another respondent referred to the amateur artists who exhibit in the trail as 'pensioners who paint' (Field Diary, 26<sup>th</sup> July 2010) – in light of the perceived demographics of the participants. Indeed, it is these

individuals, who, at the time of the fieldwork, were interpreted as the contemporary artists that embody the place branding. This also took account of a perceived lack of presence and interest, amongst 'professional' artists in the town<sup>43</sup>:

The colony died in 1949...since then there are no studios for working artists – all the studios that were, are lived in by people who say things like 'I have finally retired from commerce, I can now be what I always wanted to be, which is an artist'... There are no artists in the town. It is all retired people who want to paint... It would be nice to have more serious and professional painters in the town – not just amateurs. But that is me just being snobby (Artist, 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2010)

Interestingly, in the 2008 Spring Fling brochure (which is a region-wide open studio event for *professional* artists), there was just one professional artist's studio located in Kirkcudbright (DGC Resources Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2008: 3). This was compared with clusters of five in Kirkpatrick Durham, four in Dumfries and three in Castle Douglas and Langholm (ibid). However, since the opening of the WASPS artists' studios in 2010, the professional art community has acquired an enhanced status in the town. During the Spring Fling event in 2011, no less than six artists were exhibiting<sup>44</sup>. This emphasises that the field surrounding the place brand is continually evolving. Where, in 2010, amateur artists were seen to predominantly populate the brand, in 2011, the professional artists appear to be gaining more legitimacy and dominance (more recognition). This potentially reinforces the contemporary professional element of the Artists' Town brand.

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<sup>43</sup> Partly due to the value-laden categorisation of a 'professional' artist, as opposed to 'amateur'

<sup>44</sup> According to the Spring Fling programme, and my own observation. This only includes those situated directly in Kirkcudbright, as opposed to surrounding villages.

This section has identified the various contestations and struggles surrounding the Kirkcudbright Artists' Town brand. From a struggle of legitimacy over the artistic heritage of Kirkcudbright, to the struggle of legitimacy over the contemporary art, to the various struggles and contestations within that field:

Art is generally a strong theme but it breaks down into a variety of forms, such as contemporary and modern art, paintings and sculptures. Art, therefore can mean very different things to different people and the success of any particular arts venue will depend upon its strength of appeal and differentiation in the eyes of those with a particular interest in the subject as well as the general public (TMS, 2002: 9)

It is thus clear that the Artists' Town brand is therefore fragmented (rather than clear and coherent, as Kavaratzis, 2004 would argue), with different aspects continually competing for legitimacy. All seemingly co-exist within the brand, yet all struggle for increased recognition within it. It is also clear, especially through the WASPS development and the increasing onus on professional artists, that the field (the brand) is one that is constantly evolving and changing. The struggles for legitimacy are thus continual within the branding process.

### ***7.6 Struggles Within Contemporary Art***

In addition to the struggles within the Artists' Town brand, there were also struggles in the 'type' of art that is promoted. There was a feeling amongst many that there was a rather narrow definition of art being used within the representation of the Artists' Town brand:

Now it is marketing what you might call, 'chocolate box art' and it is becoming a 'chocolate box town' and the dirt and grime that goes with art is

being exorcised very carefully, and the policies of the Tolbooth [Art Gallery] are unadventurous (Author and Events Organiser, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2010)

As one interviewee commented "They probably won't be asking for Tracy Emin's bed with used condoms and syringes around it. It is respectable stuff they are after" (Anonymous interview, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010). The interviewee develops the idea that the 'type' of culture promoted in the Artists' Town is 'twee' and 'nice', 'pleasant' and 'attractive'. This alludes to certain cultural 'things' being in-place in the brand whilst others are perceived out-of-place:

There aren't really any shocking cultural displays. It is all quite nice, twee, woven baskets, nice rocks in bowls. It is all quite pleasant and attractive (Anonymous interview, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010)

However, the type of art that is represented in and through the Artists' Town was a matter of contestation and challenge. As two respondents commented:

Everything has to be attractive. Art has to be attractive. Why does it have to be attractive?... Why can't it be political? Why can't it be frightening? Why can't it be ugly? Why can't it be anything? If it is good and makes the point. They want something to fill the bill, to sell to the tourists and incomers with a bit of money – which is pleasant and inane (Artist, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2010)

The creative process is a somewhat anarchic and dangerous process, and if you are to have artists resident in the town – which would seem to be a prerequisite if you are going to call it an Artists' Town, then you have got to allow for that, and there is no allowance for it. It has been strangled. The artists that exhibit there now are producing either imitations of what was being done 110 years ago, or producing largely stuff that will largely sell to the tourist industry and none of them are going to have international careers as artists – they are not Howard Hodgkin, they are not Damien Hurst. I don't



think Howard Hodgkin or Damien Hirst would be seen dead in Kirkcudbright...The audiences want to be challenged and they want to come out of the city and see something exciting and radical is happening outside of it, but apparently, they are all mindless 50-somethings, with far too much money and no brains or cultural education whatsoever, who want to buy a picture of a cow. I just don't understand this sort of thinking (Author and Events Organiser, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2010)

During my fieldwork, I spoke to an artist in the region, who is not based in Kirkcudbright. I commented, rather naively, that it must be rather nice being so close to an Artists' Town. Her reaction surprised me, and encouraged me to think much more critically about art. She noted that Kirkcudbright does not have a place for the kind of art she specialises in. She felt that the genre of her work was not understood or appreciated in the town. She therefore perceived the Artists' Town to be about a particular type of art, and notably, not her own! As a result, she felt rather out-of-place in the Kirkcudbright art scene. As I noted in my research diary:

She was not impressed with Kirkcudbright as an Artists' Town, and suggested that the more contemporary artists are nearer to Dumfries. She doesn't see Kirkcudbright as an Artist Town – she sees it as rather dead – with no life and few living, contemporary artists. She commented that the art in the town is not in this century – it is dated, and old fashioned, and has not been influenced at all by the likes of Picasso. She is really not a fan of the kind of art in Kirkcudbright and suggested that her art was out of place there, and that people lacked the understanding of her art form in the town. She said that the art that is in the town is predominantly landscape and still-life – not abstract at all – which she sees as more for retirees. She suggested that there is nothing cutting edge about the place. There are only a handful of truly contemporary artists in the area. She explained that the contemporary art work gets a much better reception in the Central Belt area, than in Dumfries and Galloway and particularly Kirkcudbright. She said the cities are much more cutting edge, and Kirkcudbright is back in the

day (An artists' reaction to Kirkcudbright Artists' Town, Field Diary, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2010).

This extract really highlights various distinctions being made and reinforced through the Artists' Town brand. It also alludes to the various struggles and contestations that exist within art, and which emerge and are played out through the place brand. Linked with issues around 'type of art' and 'type of artist' and notions of being in or out-of-place, the WASPS artists' studio development, has also provoked some concern. As one respondent comments:

I have been to lots of WASPS studios all around the country and they are tips... I am not sure if they [local councillors] realise what they have let themselves in for. I think they are hoping to attract a better class of artist here, who will keep themselves neat and tidy and the buildings the same (Gallery Owner, 14<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

This quote reinforces the interpreted discourse about a particular 'type' of culture and art, and a particular 'type' of artist in the Artists' Town.

This section has identified that what may be perceived as a clear and coherent place brand from the outside (i.e. Artists' Town), is in fact, much more fragmented, incoherent and contested. This challenges the notion that place brands convey clear and coherent identities (see Kavaratzis, 2005), or even communicate clear symbolic connotations, shared experiences or common identities (see Arvidsson, 2005). All of these aspects can be seen to reinforce the Artists' Town place brand in different ways (artistic heritage; nationally acclaimed painters; contemporary amateur art; contemporary professional art). Whilst they can all be seen to form and embody the Artists' Town brand (giving the perception of a coherent place identity), as identified, the brand is fragmented, as different aspects convey and



communicate different experiences, and lifestyle and taste connotations. Within the branding process, all of these diverse elements can be seen to co-exist, whilst simultaneously, they are also competing for recognition within the brand. The brand can thus be interpreted through Bourdieu's field, whereby different actors seek to promote different aspects and experiences over others, within the brand.

### **7.7 Wigtown Book Town**

Similarly to the Artists' Town, the Book Town brand is also the site of struggles and contestations. However, unlike the Artists' Town brand, the main contestations within the Book Town brand can be seen through the relationship between the Book Festival and the bookshops (in this sense, fewer actors than in the Artists' Town). The Wigtown Book Festival began in 1998 as a very small-scale event, over two days (WBTC, 1997). Since this time, it has grown quite substantially to now be a ten-day literary festival that takes place annually at the end of September. The Book Festival website quotes *The Times* newspaper as referring to the event as "A must-attend event in Scotland's cultural calendar" (Wigtown Book Festival, 2011). The event attracts many contemporary authors to the town, to discuss their new books. This has included Christopher Brookmyre, Louis de Bernieres, Michael Morpurgo and Iain Banks (see Wigtown Book Festival, 2011). Although the main focus of the festival is the literary aspect, the festival also has a children's programme and includes film and theatre. As noted in chapter five, when the Book Town brand was initiated, the festival and the bookshops were all promoted through a single community organisation (Book Town Company). However, since 2007, the Book Town brand and the Book Festival have been managed separately.

Alongside the Book Festival are the second-hand bookshops. As discussed, Seaton and Alford (2001) suggest that Book Towns are small places with a critical mass of second-hand bookshops. Seaton (1999) notes that Hay-on-Wye, as the world's first Book Town, is also home to the Hay literary festival, which was developed after the Book Town. The festival in Hay has been a source of contention amongst the bookshops in the town (Seaton, 1999). Similarly to Hay, some of the booksellers in Wigtown are (and have been) rather sceptical of the whole festival:

When the idea was mooted... to try and make Wigtown a Book Town, I was very keen because I could see the potential and I always thought that the Book Festival was an integral part of it. Whereas, I think some of the people who first suggested it, didn't really get the idea of a book festival. They were more into second hand bookshops and the idea of the festival – with contemporary books and contemporary writers – was not really a big part of it for them (Former Book Festival Director, 11<sup>th</sup> November 2009)

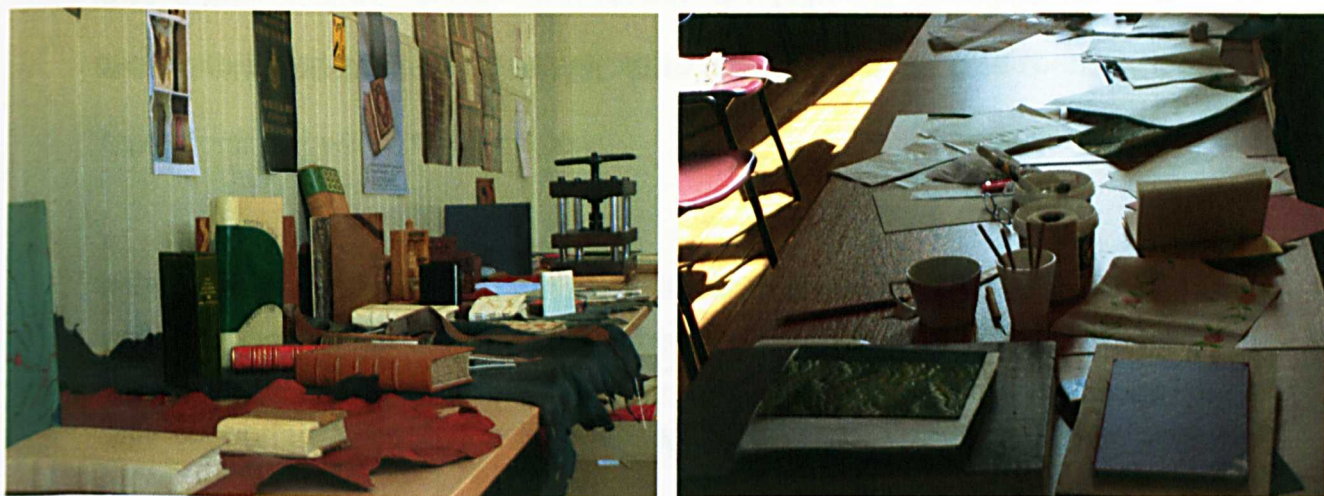
As one bookseller commented, "We are second hand bookshops remember. It is a different world" (Bookseller, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009). If one thinks of this through Bourdieu's (1984) notion of the field, it is apparent that the field of literature or books is a fractured and fragmented one. The Book Town brand can therefore be interpreted as a site of contestation, where individuals compete for dominance over particular views, values and practices (see also Painter, 2000; Grenfell, 2004). Thus, there has been (and continues to be) a struggle for legitimacy within the Book Town brand between the festival (and new books) and the second-hand bookshops – as the actors in each aspect seek to promote their own aspect. Thus, certain actors perceive a specific aspect as the most important part of the brand, which results in a contestation for dominance.

To elaborate further, each aspect of the Book Town discussed has a different logic, with different markers of distinction – which are competing against other aspects. Within the Book Festival, big-name celebrity authors can be perceived as a symbolic marker of distinction for the festival. The fact that it can attract such authors and their books increases the festival's symbolic position in relation to other festivals. Such a line-up not only attracts interested visitors, but also the attention from the literary supplements of broadsheet newspapers and lifestyle magazines. Such promotion not only reinforces such symbolic markers of distinction (i.e. the fact that they are being promoted through such media), but the festival in turn can be used to add to the legitimacy of Wigtown as a Book Town.

However, at the same time, there is a struggle for legitimacy with regard to promoting Wigtown as a Book Town concentrated on second-hand books and on the art of 'the book' more broadly<sup>45</sup>. For those interested in second-hand books or the art of book-making (i.e. book binding; book covers etc), having a book festival which attracts well-known, celebrity, contemporary authors may not mean much. What could be perceived as markers of distinction within that particular context are not interpreted as such in another. Within Wigtown in 2007, to promote the legitimacy of 'the book' in its own right, a small group of volunteers staged the Festival of the Book. This event consisted of various discussions and practical workshops (papermaking; calligraphy; bookbinding), in addition to exploring the art of books themselves (see figure 7.3).

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<sup>45</sup> Such as their binding or cover



*Figure 7.3:* Images from the Festival of the Book (2007). Left: A display of bound books. Right: A workshop on bookbinding

It was initiated in order to “not simply concentrate on big name celebrity authors coming to Wigtown as the festival does, but examine other aspects of books including crafts such as book-binding, printing and the subject matter of books” (Stranraer Free Press, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2007). Using Bourdieu’s terms, there appears to be an act of symbolic violence here, whereby contemporary authors who speak at the Book Festival are reduced to ‘celebrities’. The word celebrity in this context is not a marker of distinction, as it would be in relation to the Book Festival. However, much this festival could be seen as competing against the Book Festival – in terms of competing for recognition of other aspects of books – the event was a one-off, and did not leave much of a legacy. Within Wigtown, it is also clear that, whilst the Book Festival and the bookshops remain separate aspects of the Book Town, increasingly, the booksellers within the town recognise the importance of the festival in publicising Wigtown, and are more supportive than in the initial stages. This potentially shows that the Book Festival has gained increasing legitimacy within the Book Town brand (although the bookshops are a legitimate aspect of

the brand also). Whilst both aspects seek recognition within the place brand, both co-exist simultaneously (similarly to that in the Artists' Town). Despite the booksellers becoming more supportive of the festival, the place brand remains a site of contestation:

Certainly when I first came it was obvious that not everyone was supportive of the Book Town and Festival. Even people involved in the Book Town not necessarily seeing the benefits of the festival (Arts Administrator, Wigtown Book Festival, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2009)

With these different aspects or components of the Book Town, similarly to the finding in the Artists' Town, the place brand is fragmented and incoherent. This challenges the notion that place brands convey clear and coherent identities (see Kavaratzis, 2005), or even communicate clear symbolic connotations, shared experiences or common identities (see Arvidsson, 2005). Similarly to the situation in the Artists' Town, whilst the Book Festival and the bookshops can be seen to form and embody the Book Town brand (giving the perception of a coherent place identity), as identified, the brand is fragmented, with different aspects conveying and communicating different experiences. Both of these diverse elements can be seen to co-exist within the brand, whilst simultaneously, they compete for recognition. The brand can thus be interpreted through Bourdieu's field, whereby different actors seek to promote different aspects and experiences over others, within the brand.

### ***7.8 Castle Douglas Food Town***

Whilst the Food Town brand is also the site of struggle and contestation, the experience of this struggle is rather different from the other two. In the Artists' Town and Book Town brands there were struggles for legitimacy between two or

more aspects that seemingly co-exist within the brands. The Food Town brand is also a site of struggle and contestation, although the struggles seem to occur around what does not actually (yet) exist, but which is perceived should become more dominant within the branding.

It was noted by many (and through my ethnographic fieldwork) that the Food Town branding tends to focus on the existence of local produce in the town. This is not only supported through the independent retail units (including four butchers; a wholefoods retailer; a brewery etc), but also through a local producers market that occurs once a month, and Food Town Day, that occurs once a year. According to a banner at the Food Town Day event in 2011, it referred to Castle Douglas Food Town as:

Home to farmers markets in Dumfries and Galloway. The very best of Scotland's produce always available in this traditional market town. Whatever your shopping needs the local independent shops will be pleased to help. An initiative designed to increase the enjoyment of locally produced fresh food and drink (Food Town Banner, 2011)

Whilst the local produce may be interpreted as the legitimate culture of the Food Town brand – being interpreted by many, as the brand's strength – there is a struggle regarding the position of 'fine-dining' experiences within the branding, which is perceived by many to be lacking. The lack of a fine dining experience in the town questions the legitimacy of the Food Town place brand. Warnock and Laughlin (2006) found rather mixed responses regarding whether people felt that Castle Douglas was a Food Town. Whilst respondents acknowledged the presence of food sellers, people also commented on the lack of a fine-dining experience that they would expect to find in a Food Town. The responses included

“Castle Douglas is partly a food town, but how can you have a food town when there is no decent place to eat in the evening?” and “To be branded as a food town, the town desperately needs a high-quality, contemporary restaurant” (2006: 14):

The food stores are this town's strongest suit and it is particularly well manned with butchers selling their own livestock and deli counters stocking local cheese and ice cream. The thing which might confuse, say, a Frenchman – and the oddity over there would be to find a place which didn't consider itself a food town is where are all the decent restaurants? (MacLean, 2002: n.p)

This is also supported on VisitScotland's food and drink website, EatScotland.com (EatScotland, 2010). On this website, there is a 'foodie' guide and one can select to search within a particular region. Searching Dumfries and Galloway, there was no mention of Castle Douglas as the region's Food Town (EatScotland, 2010). Also, there were no 'eating out' places listed as being in Castle Douglas. There was, however, one bar listed and several producers (including a bakery, a brewery, a delicatessen and a wholefood retailer). The Castle Douglas farmers' market is also listed. This reinforces the strength of the town and the branding with regard to food production (as opposed to fine dining) (see EatScotland, 2010):

The branding of Castle Douglas as a Food Town – this is a personal view – has always intrigued me. What is actually meant by the Food Town? I always felt Castle Douglas' offer as a Food Town, is stronger in food production... if a visitor sees the tag Castle Douglas Food Town, you might think, great, there will be loads of great restaurants and cafes and a great food offer – and I think Castle Douglas is actually a lot weaker on that score than it is in food production... It is retail, it is certainly not fine dining and

restaurants, which a visitor might assume is meant by the branding  
(Anonymous interview, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2010)

Although the Food Town can be interpreted through Bourdieu's notion of the field, being a site of struggle and contestation, it is rather apparent that the struggles and contestations in the Food Town occur around what the brand could represent. As the youngest (newest) of the place brands explored in this research, the Food Town and the associated struggles could be seen as being in its infancy. Indeed, despite the Food Town being perceived to be about the local produce, much of this existed prior to the establishment of the brand (and was the reason why the Food Town brand was selected, as discussed in chapter five). It may therefore be that not enough people have bought into the potential of the Food Town brand due to its stage of development. As the development of the place brands explored in this research are dependent on small-scale, piecemeal private investment and the motivation of community groups (as opposed to centralised planning), the development process is likely to take a significant period of time, and will be fraught with contestations, due to the lack of control. Therefore, whilst the Food Town brand is still a site of struggle and contestation, similarly to the Artists' Town and the Book Town brands, within the Food Town brand, the main struggle occurs over the brand's potential (rather than what is currently there). Whilst it currently has a strong focus on local produce, the struggle occurs in the branding over establishing fine-dining and quality restaurants – although as noted, this is wholly subject to private investment to rectify. The current struggle in the Food Town brand is therefore about seeking to legitimise another aspect of the brand (fine-dining), which is perceived to currently not exist. As mentioned, this struggle may be linked with the current stage of development within the Food Town brand – being the newest of the brands in the region.



## 7.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has emphasised that the place brands are subject to various contestations - surrounding the brands position in place; the way the brand is represented; the various activities that are promoted; and the experiences to be had. The place brand (and what it represents) becomes a site of contestation and struggle, and these contestations and struggles differ between places (and brands) and over time. Such struggles can be interpreted through Bourdieu's (1984) notion of the field, whereby different aspects compete for recognition. This struggle can be seen as a form of position taking, whereby different aspects compete for recognition and legitimacy within the brand. It is this struggle to gain a better position (and more worth and recognition) within the branding that is arguably taking place within the branding process<sup>46</sup>. However, whilst there is this element of struggle, whereby different elements seek more recognition, it is also clear that each element appears the 'legitimate culture' to those engaged in promoting that specific aspect. These different aspects also seemingly co-exist simultaneously within the brand, thus questioning whether there is indeed a single legitimate culture, as Bourdieu (1984) argued.

As place branding is used to promote a clear and coherent message (see Kavaratzis, 2005), and it is argued that brands create a shared experience and common identity (Arvidsson, 2005), it is rather apparent that in the development of rural place brands, the process of establishing such clear messages and constructing a shared experience and common identity is an extremely contentious one. The brand can be interpreted through Bourdieu's notion of the

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<sup>46</sup> Or in the case of the Food Town brand, the struggle over encouraging other features (e.g. fine-dining to seek legitimacy within the brand)

field, which is fraught with a variety of struggles and contestations for legitimacy. It is clear that within the place brands, there are different aspects that offer different experiences – thus making the place brand rather fragmented and incoherent (which challenges Kavaratzis, 2005). This could be due to the non-centralised nature of the brand governance, as discussed in chapter five, and the emphasis on investment from small-medium sized enterprises and voluntary community groups. Whilst all of the different elements seem to co-exist within the brands, the actors involved also seek to make their own aspect the legitimate aspect of the brand. Within the rural place brands in this research, with such struggles and contestations taking place, particular aspects may, over time, acquire more dominance and legitimacy in the brand, although it is likely that the branding process will continue to be fraught with struggles and contestations, as other actors seek to transform the field (the brand) in alternative ways.

With such a situation, it is questionable how a rural place brand can communicate such coherent messages, as Kavaratzis (2005) argues. Such an understanding almost assumes that there is a 'legitimate culture' of the brand that is promoted. However, as has been demonstrated, there are multiple aspects of culture all seeking recognition and legitimacy within the place brand. Thus, it is argued that there are multiple legitimate cultures, which are related to in different ways, by different people (see Bourdieu, 1993a). It is therefore clear that there are multiple cultures that seem to co-exist simultaneously, within or associated to the place brand. Different aspects of the brand sit side-by-side with other aspects, and indeed, the place brands co-exist simultaneously with other aspects of place. Such findings also question the extent to which place brands create a whole-place narrative, which Kavaratzis (2005) argues is the case.

What this chapter has done is identify the various struggles and contestations that exist within the development of the place brands within this research. In sum, there are a variety of different struggles and contestations over the legitimate culture and practices associated with the branding. There is a constant flux of contestation, with some elements gaining more dominance than others. It is clear that, whilst there are similarities between the places – in the sense that they are all subject to various contestations and struggles of cultures – the situation in each town is also rather different, as each brand faces its own challenges and its own struggles and contestations for legitimacy, depending on its own stage of development. I would argue that the place brands therefore do not represent a single 'legitimate culture', but that the brands are fragmented and multiple – which challenges the place branding literature. With such multiplicity of the place brands, and different aspects promoting different experiences, it is also clear that the rural place brands do not necessarily convey shared experiences and a common identity, as Arvidsson (2005) argues in relation to branding. This thus questions the applicability of branding theory of products to places – as places are fundamentally more complex and contested.

In sum, what the place brands actually represent is contested. There are various struggles that take place over the brands, by different interest groups, seeking to portray the brands in particular ways. This can be interpreted through Bourdieu's notions of the field and the struggle for legitimacy. Thus, the place brand can be seen as a field (site of contestation), in which a struggle for legitimacy takes place. Different interest groups seek to make particular notions the legitimate culture of the brand, although these aspects all seemingly co-exist simultaneously. This research has therefore shown that place brands are far from clear, coherent and

holistic entities (as Kavaratzis, 2005, argues), but in fact are fragmented, with different fractions promoting different experiences. Such experiences are likely to appeal to different audiences, with different taste formations. Thus, the next chapter questions whom the perceived audiences are for the place brands, and the various struggles that take place.

## **Chapter Eight: Who are the Perceived Audiences for Place Brand**

### **Developments?**

Having discussed the various struggles and contestations over how place should be marketed, and the struggles over the meaning of the place brands (and what they represent), this chapter explores whom the intended and perceived audiences are of the place brand developments. Indeed, it is argued within the place branding and marketing literatures that marketing involves the manipulation of place image towards specific audiences (see Gotham. 2002), as brands are imbued with particular symbolic meanings and associations, in order to portray various lifestyle experiences to specific consumers (see Arvidsson, 2005). Therefore, it is argued that brands are potentially constructed and represented in particular ways, in order to communicate particular messages to specific audiences. However, through critical engagement with the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu and the literature on tastes and lifestyles, this chapter argues that the audience of the place brands is actually rather contested, as different aspects of the brand potentially appeal to different audiences. Thus, there is a struggle for legitimacy, not only over the meaning of the brands (as discussed in the previous chapter), but also over the audiences of the brands.

### ***8.1 Dumfries and Galloway's Visitor Profile***

The Dumfries and Galloway Community Plan notes that there are "opportunities to market Dumfries and Galloway as a tourist attraction to target audiences and niche markets" (2000: 8). This plan uses Wigtown Book Town as a prime example. This not only questions who the target audiences are, but also the types of niches or activities they are perceived to be interested in.

According to Dumfries and Galloway Council, "the region is most attractive to the 55+ age group (29% of all visitors)" (DGC, 1996: 20). Since 1996, the number of visitors in this age category has appeared to increase. According to a report in 2004, 45% of visitors to Dumfries and Galloway were aged over 55 years, with 42% aged between 35 and 54 (LDC, 2004: 75). This report notes that the age profile of visitors to Dumfries and Galloway is 'significantly older' than the visitor to Scotland more broadly and that 65% of those visitors were in the ABC1 social categories<sup>47</sup> (ibid). According to the Dumfries and Galloway Area Tourism Partnership, consumer and lifestyle trends include a greater interest in culture, arts and history (amongst others) – which were perceived to be strong products within the region (ATP, 2007: 4). This report also noted that:

The majority of visitors to the area lead an active life, take two or more short breaks a year and are keen to enrich their life through educational and cultural development. Most are at the peak of their earning power with money to spend on leisure and entertainment. Favourite pastimes include reading, travel, music, eating out and increasingly more active outdoor pursuits (ATP, 2007: 2)

With such a visitor profile, it could be hypothesised that the place brands – around food, art and books – would be appealing to such a visitor. VisitScotland is the National Tourism Organisation for Scotland and is responsible for marketing Scotland as an attractive place for tourists to visit. I was informed, "We [VisitScotland] very much focus on promoting experiences, matched to the target audience" (Areas Manager, VisitScotland, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2010). As such, VisitScotland has undertaken a wealth of research on the profiles of visitors, in order to create products for desired target audiences and market effectively. The organisation has

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<sup>47</sup> This can be compared to the UK population more broadly, 48% of whom are categorised as ABC1. 61% of UK tourists to Scotland were also classified as ABC1 (LDC, 2004: 75)

categorised visitors into six categories (see VisitScotland, 2010), of which Dumfries and Galloway focus on a couple<sup>48</sup>. One of these is the 'Affluent Active Devotee'. According to the profile, they can be described as people whom:

Enjoy living life to the full, taking plenty of short breaks and occasional longer holidays. They are well-travelled experience seekers. They will revisit special places, but also try new destinations, and they make sure they mark special occasions. Whilst they like to plan where they go, they are also quite spontaneous, and will often book accommodation close to time of travel, reflecting their confidence and knowledge. Some of them use the Internet actively, for convenience, booking accommodation online, whilst others are less internet-savvy. Scotland is a close destination for them, and one they love. They are the highest spenders of all on Scottish holidays. This is because they participate in activities, including golf and other sports, but also because they treat themselves to the finer things in life: preferring to stay in hotels and enjoying good food and drink (VisitScotland, 2010)

The profile states that they are 'high affluence', the 'second oldest market segment', 'upmarket and traditional', 'enjoy the finer things in life' and 'eat in good restaurants'. This implies a level of sophistication and discernment that Bourdieu would argue could also be seen as symbolic markers of distinction (see Bourdieu, 1984; Lane, 2000). According to VisitScotland, Affluent Active Devotees "are a little bit more discerning, they have more money, professional – maybe retired now – into food, culture, wildlife, golf. So again, they are a strong market for Dumfries and Galloway. We talk about how they like to be active – they like the finer things in life" (Areas Manager, VisitScotland, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2010). The interviewee recalled, "Dumfries and Galloway has traditionally gone for 'empty nesters' as we used to

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<sup>48</sup> According to the Areas Manager at VisitScotland these are 'Mature Devotees' and 'Affluent Active Devotees'

call them, and had an aspiration to go for more upscale ones" (Areas Manager, VisitScotland, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2010). Thus, there appears to be an aspiration within VisitScotland to attract a particular type of audience (consumer). The aspiration for more 'upscale' visitors also implies some form of hierarchical structure.

Such hierarchical structure can also be seen in relation to an individual's economic position. As a report by TMS claimed in 1990 "Improved economic performance depends on attracting higher-value holiday segments" (TMS, 1990: 11). The economic importance of tourism can be noted here - a desire for individuals with more money, in order to reap greater economic rewards. The 'Affluent Active Devotees' were seen as the most desirable visitors to the region, as they are perceived to be the ones who spend money – thus, supporting the economy:

In terms of the strategic marketing of the region... most is spent on the 'Affluent Active Devotees' because they have the most disposable income. They are the ones we want to grow, for best benefit to the economy... In terms of bringing the biggest amount of money to the economy, it is the 'Affluent Active Devotees' (Areas Manager, VisitScotland, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2010)

Therefore, a discourse emerges about a particular 'type' of tourist that is desired – a more 'upscale one' (more discerning?), with a certain economic position, as can be seen in the 'Affluent Active Devotee'. Of course, these categories are only typologies – and we must not assume that people fit neatly into a category and as such have the stated tastes, lifestyles and interests. I am sure if a microanalysis was undertaken on people's practices, we would find it much more problematic and contested than has been portrayed. Certainly in my own ethnography, I have found this to be the case. It is extremely problematic to categorise individuals into a particular segment, as each tourists' background and practices are potentially



different. However, what for me is important, is the way in which this is the perceived target market, and VisitScotland are seeking to attract that particular 'type' of market segment, through offering and promoting various experiences. In this sense, the region (and places) are being constructed, packaged and represented in particular ways, in order to attract that perceived audience. Indeed, it could be argued that the construction of such market segments and visitor typologies (however mythical they may appear at first), could in fact lead to the construction of such audiences. In this sense, guided by the constructed typologies, places and products are strategically marketed and symbolically communicated in particular ways to consumers, with the intention of making such practices appear legitimate and desirable. As Bourdieu notes, symbolic action is used, whereby norms and needs are established and imposed, allowing certain material or cultural goods, or lifestyles to be 'sold' to potential consumers (1984: 345). Through this symbolic communication, meaning is attached to various tastes and practices, which forms a hierarchy of taste. Through such a symbolic mechanism, consumers are thus produced (Bourdieu, 1984), which then continues to reproduce the social condition in a particular way, as meaning is attached to practices and tastes implying notions of superiority (distinction) and inferiority.

## ***8.2 Place Brands for a Particular Audience?***

With this desire for more 'upscale', discerning tourists with disposable income, the place brands become symbolic tools of communication (see Arvidsson, 2005), designed to represent particular meanings and experiences. Guided by constructed visitor typologies, and various hierarchical assumptions about the legitimacy of particular cultural practices and tastes, the place brands are therefore arguably used to actually produce such consumers (and demand), through the symbolic portrayal of lifestyle experiences:

For us, certainly in VisitScotland, we want to see the development strategies hooked around the target audiences, so that it is very clear that we have the right product range in place, to attract the audience that the region wants to get (Areas Manager, VisitScotland, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2010)

Through such a process, the place brands are perceived to appeal to individuals with particular dispositions and personal characteristics. This does not necessarily have to represent the lived reality of those places, but the symbolic power of the brand communicates messages about what the brands and places represent, and the 'type' of people that consume such experiences. The brands are thus imbued with a meaning that portrays elements of distinction and taste that would appeal to discerning visitors (see Bourdieu, 1984). Through this, the place brands are perceived to appeal to 'Affluent Active Devotees', which therefore brings such visitor typologies into existence (see Bourdieu, 1984). The associated branding and marketing thus continue to reinforce such messages and perceptions, which eventually acquire legitimacy and dominance within the mind of society and consumers:

The art, or the food or the books that are being defined are reflections of the audience they want... You are actually creating something that the viewer from afar can buy into – as their perception. What you are actually doing is creating a mirror that reflects their perception...they [the funding bodies] see that as the market, therefore they start defining the place and they will only give money. The reason [Glorious Galloway Consortium] got the money for FAB is because [they] satisfied the mythologies that exist within VisitScotland, the tourist board etc. [They] satisfied their mythologies. They then have to be met, so this is designed to make it look like what they think it should look like, which again defines the place (Author and Events Organiser, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2010)

In this sense, place is potentially constructed around the ideals of a particular target audience – who are perceived to like good food, art and books. The discourses that exist about cultural tastes and social distinction are therefore continually permeated through such a process and place myths start emerging. These myths then start to become slightly real in the sense that you are then creating spaces around the myth, which associates destinations with particular lifestyle experiences and taste connotations (see Morgan *et al.*, 2004).

Through the place brands, it was perceived that they would appeal to the 'Affluent Active Devotees' visitor<sup>49</sup> (the desired target audience), who is constructed as a consumer with such tastes. Indeed, as there are strategic moves within VisitScotland to increase Dumfries and Galloway's share of such a visitor (older people, with money to spend on cultural goods and experiences), the place brands could be interpreted as promoting such lifestyle experiences, in order to attract particular consumers. As these consumers are constructed as being discerning, cultured and looking for quality experiences, the place brands could be seen to be symbolically communicating such messages through marketing strategies. Just like commercial products, through branding and marketing, places and brands can be constructed to represent particular lifestyles (with associated meanings) (see Kavaratzis, 2004).

As such meanings and representations of the brand are symbolically communicated (through branding and marketing), they potentially reinforce particular lifestyles and connotations. As this process continues, there is the potential for such meanings to become more established – in a way that makes them appear legitimate (see Bourdieu, 1984). As this happens, not only are

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<sup>49</sup> According to the Areas Manager, VisitScotland

individuals potentially enticed to visit the places, due to the power of the brand, but the brand also has the power to reinforce notions of taste and distinction, which further produces the consumer, which further reproduces the social condition (see Bourdieu, 1984). It is therefore rather clear how Bourdieu is useful in allowing us to understand how marketing and branding can thus symbolically legitimise culture and tastes (through associating particular meanings), which creates a demand for it by producers, which then continues to reproduce that condition. As one respondent commented in relation to the Artists' Town:

What they are selling is actually an aspect of culture, which actually is a mirror to the aspirations of the people they are trying to sell it to, rather than a mirror of the culture that they are trying to exploit. In other words, the visual arts for example, is a wide range of activities – from film, installation, to painting, to drawing to whatever else – and really it doesn't want any of that. What it wants is saying 'what do the disposable income, fifty plus people have on their wall?', 'what would they be interested in going to see?', this type of art – so it is therefore, this type of Artists' Town, not 'artists' really (Author and Events Organiser, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2010)

What the above quote highlights is not only the wide diversity within 'art', but also a perceived desire to attract a particular target audience through art. It is also interesting how this respondent is implying that the Artists' Town brand (and the art associated with such brand), is constructing a particular type of consumer. The way he refers to 'the aspirations of the people they are trying to sell it to' (who happen to be perceived as the over-fifties with disposable income) almost refers to particular forms of art as symbolic markers of distinction. As Harvey argues, the promotion of place "is increasingly geared to manipulating desires and tastes through images" (1989b: 287).

Indeed, as such connotations of the brand (and who it is for) become more legitimate and dominant, others also accept this view, seemingly without question. Thus, numerous organisations, agencies, and individuals who were questioned within this research shared a similar understanding as to what the place brands represented and who they were for (i.e. older individuals, with disposable income):

[VisitScotland] have segmented the target audience and we agree with them, that it is probably more of an older population, who are probably return visitors, and they want to come and have a quality experience when they come up here. So I think we are looking for people who spend a decent amount on their staycations... I think it is very middle class. There is a class thing. It is all this Guardian reading, organic, farmers market type, because I guess we think they have the most money to spend. That is probably the high end that we are trying to attract... in terms of the family, activity-based holidays, I wouldn't necessarily say it is that kind of market that you are attracting (Anonymous interview, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010)

Dumfries and Galloway is an interesting place because it attracts a lot of people as tourists, and then a lot of people come here to retire, and I think those are the folk that are looking for these food, art, book type experiences. Because of where I work [an ice cream factory and activity centre], I meet the people who have families with kids to entertain, but in my time away from work I'm seeing a lot of people in the region that are not entertaining children. They are adults looking to please themselves. I would imagine those are the folk who are directed to these towns (Visitor Attraction Manager, 21<sup>st</sup> April 2010)

It is interesting how both of the above quotes allude to a similar narrative about the places and the place brands. Therefore, a particular meaning has seemingly become legitimate within the place brands. They are seen to represent particular lifestyles, experiences and values – for particular individuals (notably, older cultured individuals, with spare time and disposable income). The audience of the

place brands is thus constructed (represented) as being rather different to the audiences at other attractions, such as an ice cream activity centre (seeking different experiences).

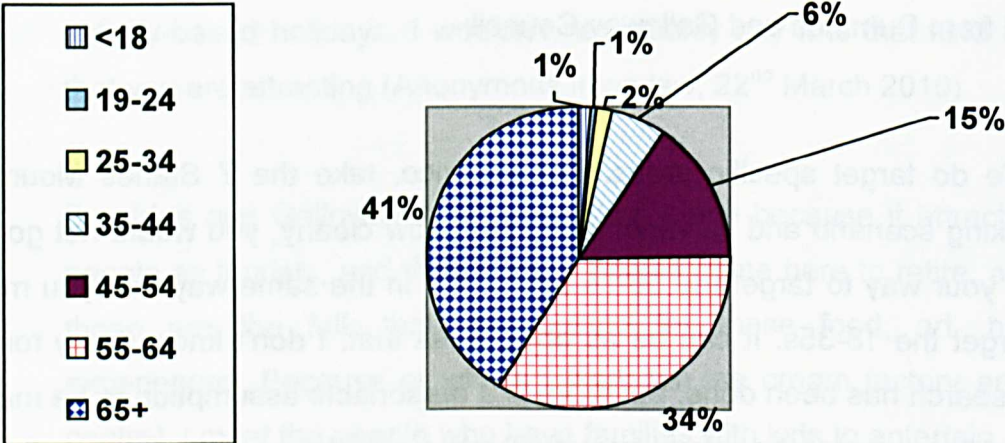
Such discourses are not only portrayed through the marketing and promotion of the place brands, but through individually held assumptions (about individuals with certain tastes), and also market research and development reports. A report regarding the establishment of the Tolbooth Art Centre in Kirkcudbright in 1990 emphasised that art galleries are generally appealing to a limited number of people, and that “traditionally, art/museum products have a narrow market appeal and are most popular with high income, older age groups” (TMS, 1990: 10). A similar discourse regarding the target audience of particular leisure activities also emerged from Dumfries and Galloway Council:

We do target specific areas. For instance, take the 7 Stanes Mountain Biking scenario and its various courses, now clearly, you would not go out of your way to target the 55-75 age group in the same way that you might target the 18-35s. It can be as obvious as that. I don't know if any formal research has been done, but there is a reasonable assumption to be made, that the people who attend book festivals are in the upper-half of the Socio-Economic bracketing (Anonymous interview, 28<sup>th</sup> October 2009)

Indeed, such an assumption that certain activities are more appealing to particular people is supported by tourist agencies such as VisitScotland, which segments the tourist market and constructs visitor categories. However, such assumptions are not necessarily purely symbolic (or mythical) – they may also represent reality to some extent. Indeed, it may be that due to habitus, individuals from different social conditions (based on class, gender, ethnicity, age) are more disposed to particular cultural practices than others, which could then reinforce such assumptions. For

instance, the visitor survey for the Wigtown Book Festival in 2009 indicated that out of 127 respondents, 38% were aged between 55 and 64 and 32% were aged over 65 years; 14% were aged 45-54; 8% were aged 35-44 and only 3% were aged younger than 35 (Wigtown Book Festival, 2009a). According to this survey, the numbers of children and younger adults were very low. According to the 2008 Economic Impact Study of the Wigtown Book Festival, “The festival audience tends to be relatively mature, many of retirement age” (Cogentsi, 2009: 8). Both of these sources provide similar data to the 2005 festival (Wigtown Book Festival, 2005) – with the audience comprised mainly of older individuals<sup>50</sup> (see figure 8.1; see also Barr, 2006).

**Age of Wigtown Book Festival Audience 2005**



*Figure 8.1: Age of the audience at Wigtown Book Festival (2005)*

It is noteworthy that Cogentsi found that “Incomes of those attending [the Wigtown Book Festival] are significantly above the average and there is a predilection for quality newspapers” (Cogentsi, 2009: 9). It noted that festivalgoers tend to read the National, quality, broadsheets (The Herald, The Scotsman, The Guardian, The Times, Daily Telegraph, Daily Mail and the Independent). Sunday papers include

<sup>50</sup> 18 and under = 1.4%; 19 – 25 = 0.5%; 25 – 34 = 1.7%; 35 – 44 = 5.9%; 45 – 54 = 15.2%; 55 – 64 = 33.8%; 65+ = 41% (Wigtown Book Festival, 2005)

The Sunday Times, Scotland on Sunday, The Observer, Sunday Herald and The Sunday Telegraph. This was also found in the visitor survey of 2005<sup>51</sup>. With regard to the income of visitors, "A mean gross annual household income of respondents of £40,980. This is considerably higher than recent estimates of mean household income for Scotland and the UK: it compares to an average for Scotland of £32,119 (2007) and UK of £34,166 suggesting that the festival is attracting individuals to Wigtown with considerably higher incomes than the population as a whole" (Cogentsi, 2009: 20-21). These sources imply an older audience, with money. Similarly, regarding who the perceived target audience is of a Book Town, Tony Seaton commented:

What you should know about the profile of a book town visitor, not unexpectedly, they are mainly middle class, not necessarily rich, not just the upper middle class, but also the middle middle classes and the dealers. They tend to be educated; they tend to be older, which is a danger, because one of the big things that is effecting not just book towns, but the whole second hand book business, is the buyers are getting older, there's not many young people like yourself for example, who start collecting antiquarian books or even second hand books (Tony Seaton, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2008)

Of course, the concept of class is deeply contested and, as Savage *et al.* (1992) highlight, the relationship between class and cultural practices is also rather complex. Seaton alludes to such complexity, in identifying the fragmented nature of the 'middle class', although he also notes similar dispositions and tastes between those fractions. Simply reducing one's tastes and practices to their social

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<sup>51</sup> The Herald (32%); The Times (13%); Daily Mail (12.8%); The Telegraph (12.4%); The Scotsman (11.6%); The Guardian (8.9%); The Independent (5.4%); The Express (2.7%); Other (1.5%). Weekend papers - Sunday Times (23.6%); Mail on Sunday (21.2%); Sunday Herald (20%); Observer (18.5%); Scotland on Sunday (9.5%); The Independent (5.6%); The Guardian (4.6%); Sunday Mail (4.2%) (Wigtown Book Festival, 2005).



position is therefore rather problematic. However, as Seaton notes "Virtually all of Hay's [Book Town] visitors are 'quality', rather than 'mass' tourists. Ninety per cent of them are educated, professional people with high levels of discretionary income (teachers, lecturers, doctors, senior managerial figures and dealers etc)" (1999: 391). As commented by one respondent, in relation to Wigtown Book Town, the "people who they [?] seek to attract to the town are the quality, book-reading tourists – not just any type of tourist. They tend to be older and middle-class, with more disposable income. Therefore, they try and appeal to those particular tastes" (Excerpt from Field Diary, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2009). As noted in minutes of the Chamber of Commerce and in the business plan of Wigtown Book Town Company, the town seeks tourists who are bookbuyers (Wigtown Chamber of Commerce, 2007:11; Wigtown Book Town Company, 1997: 7). Therefore, a desire to attract people with particular tastes and interests – people with a predilection for reading, which is perceived to be the 'middle classes' (however that may be defined). A similar point was made in relation to the Artists' Town:

I suppose in branding the place, it is inevitably aiming for a particular sort of visitor – one's that are interested in the arts – which suggests a slightly more upmarket, middle class branding (Artist, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

Whether these findings do imply that certain individuals are more disposed to particular cultural practices than others – based on their social position – is a matter of contestation. However, it is clear that there are various assumptions and discourses that seem to reinforce symbolically such association between one's practices and personal characteristics (however 'real' that may be). Indeed, such understandings (and marketing segments) could in fact continue to reproduce such assumptions and practices, as branding and marketing strategies reinforce particular messages and connotations.

Indeed, these assumptions and values ascribed to particular cultural practices, tastes and even individuals can be seen to shape the development of the brands. As one individual, who has been heavily involved in the development of Kirkcudbright Artists' Town commented, "We are going for an intelligent sort of visitor" (Anonymous interview, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010). This again, identifies a particular type of visitor, targeted through the branding. This same respondent commented:

It's the place where we all live, so we don't want it spoiling. We weren't looking to turn Kirkcudbright into a mini Blackpool, or something. It is not that sort of place. It was important that the branding be aimed at the right level (Anonymous interview, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010)

Therefore, there is a discourse about a particular type of development, for a particular type of audience. This could be seen as a process of symbolic violence, whereby a particular culture (and consumer) is valued more highly than others, and imposed on the place development in a way that appears legitimate (see Painter, 2000).

Similarly, with regard to the target audience of the Book Town, one bookseller commented, "I think mainly intellectual people of all ages" (Bookseller, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2009). Another bookseller noted, "The person has to be educated. They have to be able to read. And he has to have some money... I am finding more and more, my customer base is getting older and older, and the younger ones are not reading. They are more interested in the Internet than reading books" (Bookseller, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009). These quotes have all addressed and identified a discourse of an older audience, an educated audience and one with disposable income. They are also perceived to be discerning and respectful – in essence, with social

distinction. As one interviewee concluded, "It is all a bit middle classy really isn't it?" (Activity Centre Manager, 21<sup>st</sup> April 2010). The place brands potentially become a mechanism through which such meanings are symbolically communicated – to visitors, but also to local people.

### **8.3 Glorious Galloway: Food, Art, Books**

The same assumptions existed about the Glorious Galloway: Food, Art, Books promotional campaign, and many interviewees commented on the synergy between the three brands. As such, the audience of the place brands were often spoken about, as if they represented a homogenous group with the same interests. As one interviewee commented, "It is a nod in the direction that people who are interested in art, are going to be interested in good quality food, they are going to be readers and interested in books. The three seem to go together well. They are natural bed-fellows in appealing to that particular niche market" (Museums Curator, DGC, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2010). This seems to be very much related to Bourdieu's notion of the field, as being homologous and relational and with individuals from particular social conditions having similar dispositions and tastes (Bourdieu, 1984; Grenfell, 2004; Bennett *et al.*, 2009). As the designer of the F.A.B brand commented:

[The target audience] was quite specific. It was people probably in the 50s upwards, who have maybe had their kids and families – they have got a bit of money – their mortgage is almost paid off – they are looking for a holiday, whether it is a bit of escapism, taking it easy, enjoying the good things in life – the great outdoors, they enjoy their food, they are quite cultured – so they like art and presumably they like books and reading. That was very much the target audience... We simply took the first three letters, F.A.B – Food, Art and Books and realised that it created the word FAB... As soon as we realised, we could see that there was a whole campaign based

around 'it's FAB to do this; it's FAB to do that'. At the time, the TV series was on as well 'Absolutely Fabulous'. It seemed to sum up the right vibe about people who are probably quite affluent – got a bit of money to spend – it was quite tongue in cheek and quite jokey as well (Weesleekit Design, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2010)

Food, art and books appear to be taken as homogenous entities, which a specific audience will relate to in the same way – which as will be discussed, is rather problematic. Despite such an unproblematic view of culture, the F.A.B logo and promotional materials portray social distinction and quality – furthering and reinforcing assumptions about who the target audience is. The logo resembles the Farrow and Ball quality paint logo (figure 8.2), which claim to be, “manufacturers of the very best wallpapers and paint... of the highest quality... [And] which are world-renowned” (F&B, 2009). This portrays a symbolism of discernment and sophistication (see Lane, 2000). Schreiber (1994) notes the way in which companies sponsor particular events in order to be associated with particular values. Clearly, the Farrow and Ball connection could be seen as a similar case in point – although Farrow and Ball did not sponsor the Glorious Galloway project, the regional campaign has tried to associate itself with the Farrow and Ball brand. It is the symbolic association that is therefore significant.

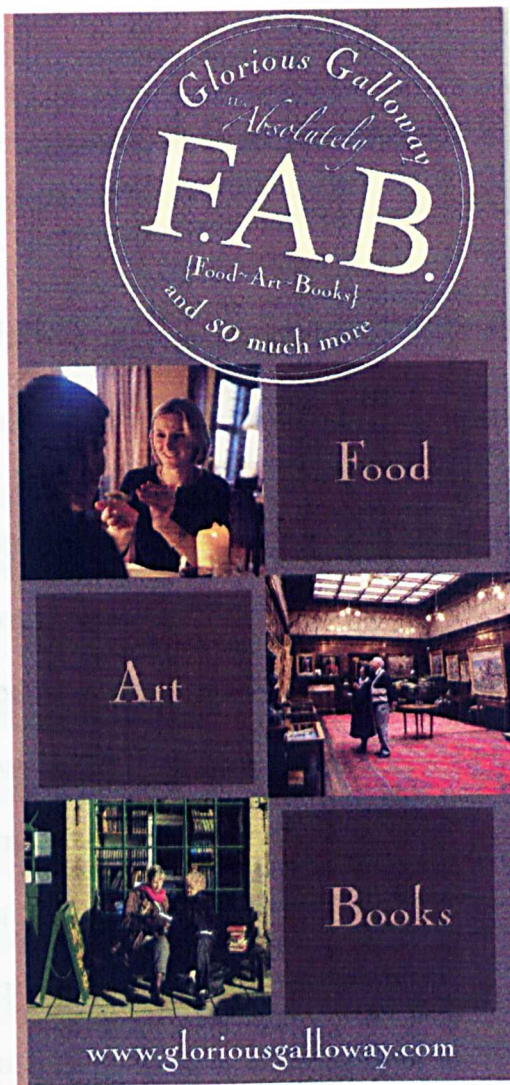


Figure 8.2: Promotional material for the Food, Art, Books campaign and the Farrow and Ball paint logo (from Homebase, 2009)

The deep burgundy and the cream logo arguably portray notions of class, distinction and taste and will potentially appeal to older, middle class audiences who have disposable income. These rich colours would not be out of place in particular lifestyle magazines (such as *Country Living*). The colours used could thus be interpreted as a sign that symbolises the type of experiences that the place brands are likely to offer, and for whom. It does not necessarily portray the region as a bustling and trendy destination for young people. Thus, place and the region more broadly, is packaged as a place of distinction, for consumption by a desired audience. As one interviewee commented, "The typography of it, is an

intellectual, or elite – certainly an older generation, rather than a younger generation – people with money, and an educated class of people” (Anonymous interview, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010). As one of those directly involved in the F.A.B initiative commented:

Well, we thought about what is our target market and we think it is older... not really young people, but people in late middle age onwards, with income to spare, who will come to Galloway, maybe not as their main holiday but as their second holiday or their short break and will spend money on books, art and food... The middle class, older, middle aged upwards. People who have two holidays a year market. Hence the Farrow and Ball (Bookseller, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2009)

As a result of striving to attract this target audience, the place brands have been promoted within lifestyle magazines<sup>52</sup> – as the readership of such publications are perceived to be those interested in food, art and books:

We saw the kinds of people who would read those magazines [Cheshire Life; Lancashire Life; Cumbria Life etc] as being our target market. They tend to be people of the age group we are talking about, they tend to be people who have that little bit extra disposable income and are within the three hour drive (Glorious Galloway Co-ordinator, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010)

Consequently, by targeting a particular audience – with particular tastes and dispositions, places are represented in particular ways. Gotham (2002) acknowledges that this is the case with place marketing more broadly, whereby the images of place are adapted and altered in order to be more appealing to a particular target audience. As Macleod identifies, in relation to Dumfries and

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<sup>52</sup> These include Scottish Fields; Dumfries and Galloway Life; Homes and Interiors Magazine, to name a few

Galloway - "it is attractive to a particular type of tourist who has an interest in a range of niche products such as 'high culture', quality food and walking: for example, the mature 'Empty Nesters', or SKI (Spending Kids Inheritance) groups targeted by the local tourist board" (2009:140; see also Macleod, 2003; DGTB, 2001). Targeting a particular market segment – and representing places in particular ways in order to attract that segment – is just a process of marketing. Of course, marketing campaigns need to be relatively focused and targeted, and as a result, will appeal to some people more than others:

It is like a lot of things, you cant be everything to everybody so you prioritise it, in terms of that as the main audience and if we can catch some of these other audiences – all well be – but we cant try and be everything to everyone, because then it actually gets quite diluted and starts to get a bit wishy-washy (Weesleekit Design, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2010)

Hopefully, this section has illustrated how assumptions and discourses about cultural tastes and practices – and associations with ones social position (age; level of education; class) – permeate such developments around cultural brands. The brands are thus constructed symbolically, to portray particular lifestyle connotations to a specific audience.

#### ***8.4 Place Branding: A Symbolic Process of Exclusion?***

With the marketing construction of a specific target audience (i.e. Affluent Active Devotees) for the place brands, place and the brands are potentially being portrayed symbolically for a very specific audience – or at least, interpreted as such. However, as particular notions about whom the target audience is gains more legitimacy (as is arguably the case within Kirkcudbright and Wigtown), the place brand could appear exclusionary. Whilst it may attract those interested in

such a brand, it may also discourage others from visiting. As Bourdieu (1984) acknowledges, taste has the capacity to bring people together – with similar tastes and dispositions – but it also has the power to separate and divide. It is important to acknowledge that there are going to be individuals with different tastes and dispositions. What appeals to one, may not appeal to another. As one interviewee commented, “You are obviously choosing who you want to come [through branding]” (Activity Centre Manager, 21<sup>st</sup> April 2010).

As place brands symbolically communicate particular messages to consumers (see Arvidsson, 2005), the brand has to be rather focused. The process of place branding and marketing is therefore, potentially an exclusionary one, based around issues of taste. Whilst not explicitly excluding individuals, place branding around niche cultural products could implicitly create spaces more attractive to particular people than others:

In marketing you have to decide who your target audience is, then go for it... When you are doing pre-arrival marketing to get an audience, I think you have to be quite focused on what that audience is looking for, and what the research is telling you about them, and what would appeal to them, rather than try and cover all the bases, because you can then achieve less, by trying to appeal to too many people (Areas Manager, VisitScotland, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2010)

As the above quote states, one must focus on the desired audience and send out specific messages to that audience, focusing on what appeals to them. Therefore, through the marketing process, one can see the places being branded in particular ways, in order to appeal to particular people:



Well, there is a clue in the title – Food, Art and Books – it is going to appeal to the middle-classes. It is going to target the older, middle-classes – those with a fair degree of social and cultural mobility and with disposable income. 'What shall we do for the weekend?', 'Let's go to Castle Douglas, get some food, and while we are there we will go to Kirkcudbright and look at the art galleries there'... So, it's not going to appeal to the sun, sea and sand brigade. There is probably a touch of intellectual snobbery – because it is going to appeal to people who are seen to be well heeled and have money to spend (Anonymous interview, 16th March 2010)

The above quote alludes to a particular type of lifestyle, with particular practices – followed by particular 'types' of people. This not only addresses a rather exclusionary process, but one imbued with specific values, which this interviewee refers to as 'intellectual snobbery'. Such values ascribed to particular practices, really highlight a Bourdieusian understanding of practice. The idea that the 'sun, sea and sand brigade' are interpreted as being in some lesser position than one who embodies the place brands in this study, clearly highlights some form of hierarchical notion of practice and taste. The visiting of art galleries and the purchasing of food from the Food Town are portrayed as some form of leisured and cultured pastime – a legitimate activity. There is as such symbolic meaning ascribed to various tastes and practices, which supports Bourdieu (1984) and Chaney (1996). As such, the Food, Artists' and Book Town brands, whilst attracting niche (quality?) markets, may not attract wider (or mass?) markets. This discourse portrays some form of consumption practice, experienced by a few individuals, with legitimate taste. As noted by TMS, "greater diversity of the retail product is needed [in Wigtown] (e.g. antiques, crafts etc) to ensure that there is sufficient interest for the general tourist in particular. More could also be provided for families" (2003: 13). However, as one interviewee warned, "I think there are dangers in being associated with one type of activity. You will narrow the target

audience if you go down that route” (Anonymous interview, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010). Thus, we must critically acknowledge such niche tourism place branding – as it inevitably will not appeal to everyone:

To try and promote yourself appealing to one person, you are then narrowing the whole thing down completely. What you want to do is try and advertise everything you have got, to try and appeal to the bigger, majority of people... If you try to dedicate to people who are into art or books, then you are only looking at a small segment of the population. If you dedicate all your advertising and all your drive towards those sectors, other people will look and think ‘I’m not interested in that. I won’t bother with that area’ (Food Town Chairman, 7<sup>th</sup> April 2010)

Bourdieu and Bennett *et al.* (2009) both acknowledge the link between cultural practices and social position. Whilst, of course, the link between the two can be challenged and it can be contested as a generalisation (see Savage *et al.*, 1992), there does appear to be such an emergent discourse, surrounding the place brands. As one respondent commented:

It is very much the politics of culture. I would think there is a particular audience for that, which is not to be found in the housing schemes of Easterhouse or Pilton or Craigmillar. They are more likely to be found in the Bearsdens, the Milngavies, the Morningsides, the Ravelstons and the Barringtons of the world – sorry, these are Edinburgh and Glasgow areas – wealthy areas. Easterhouse, Drumchapel are council housing schemes. Even in Dumfries, we have places like North West Dumfries – huge council estate – you are not going to get them going there. That is not for them. They are going to go to Benidorm – saved up all year, or paying for it on their credit card, and pay it back over the next year. They are not going to go there, because there is nothing there for them. That is not cultural snobbery. That is just a statement of the realities of life. You see this in places like Edinburgh Airport, there are more people from the working class

areas of Edinburgh going to Spain, Portugal, Cyprus, Malta than there are going to Paris or Amsterdam, Brussels or Geneva (Anonymous interview, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010)

Such a discourse and assumptions can also be found in consultation reports and research. According to a consultation report regarding a potential new arts centre in Dumfries, the report reinforces notions about the association between class and social position and one's taste. The report claims that 'wealthy achievers' – particularly 'affluent greys' are more "likely to be interested in outdoor activities such as angling, hiking, birdwatching and gardening as well as interest in fine arts, antiques and opera music" (LDC, 2004: 69). Conversely, according to this report, those who are 'hard pressed', particularly 'struggling families' and 'burdened singles' are characterised by low income, routine jobs and unemployment. "This type tends to live in purpose-built flats or terraced housing, to have few qualifications and to be interested in activities such as angling and bingo. This type is significantly less interested in theatre / arts than the rest of the population" (LDC, 2004: 69). Of course, such assumptions and generalisations are problematic, yet clearly show how certain practices and tastes appear rather legitimate (consumed by those with 'taste' and distinction).

Through the construction, promotion and representation of the place brands in particular ways (for the desired target audiences), this ascribes particular values and meanings to the brands (i.e. symbolically promoting various experiences). By promoting such experiences to consumers, the brands have the potential to appear rather exclusive – promoting a particular type of culture, for people with specific taste formations. With regard to Wigtown Book Town, one respondent noted "how some local people felt that the Book Town idea and the festival and its events were all above them – more elite. They therefore don't participate" (Excerpt

from Field Diary, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2009). Despite such feelings, individuals are not explicitly or overtly excluded. Thus, there are obviously some implicit meanings and understandings attached to the brands, as to what the brand represents and who it is for:

There was a feeling in the beginning, especially, that this [Book Town] just wasn't for local folk. It was something that outsiders would come in [for] (D&G Councillor, 13<sup>th</sup> October 2009)

The place brands therefore appear to be imbued with particular meanings, values and discourses, which potentially exclude those who do not consume such forms of culture, or partake in particular practices. This is similar to that identified by previous research, whereby the reimagining of the city – through entrepreneurial strategies – can leave individuals feeling excluded and marginalized from the representation of the place (which is directed towards others) (see Waitt, 1999; Gibson, 2005; Boyle and Hughes, 1991). The same kind of situation can be found within the Artists' Town. As one interviewee commented, "A lot of people are put off by art – they think it is a bit high brow" (Museums Curator, DGC, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2010). The situation occurs to a much less extent in the Food Town – as locals tend to use the shops to buy their food – regardless of the Food Town brand or not<sup>53</sup>.

On the other hand, the places potentially become more attractive to those who like reading, art and food, as the brands symbolically convey particular lifestyle experiences and connotations. These individuals are then attracted to a place –

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<sup>53</sup> Although it would be interesting to see how many 'locals' use the independent shops of the town, compared to the number who do their shopping in the Tesco store, which opened in Castle Douglas in 2006.

either to visit or to live – which then constructs a space for individuals with particular shared tastes as discussed in chapter six. Therefore, whilst the place brands may potentially exclude, they also include, based on issues of taste.

However, we must critically note that the place brands could potentially represent different experiences, for different audiences, as the cultural fields (e.g. food, art, books) are themselves diverse. Also, these places are not products – so will mean different things to different people, and potentially attract different audiences:

Fair enough if you are doing a product – who is going to argue with you?... Aquafresh – blue and white stripes – nobody is going to contest that and say 'actually, I feel passionately'... whereas in something like this, everyone has an opinion... Once you say 'this is what we are about', you are then excluding people – like here in Kirkcudbright – once you say 'art', to some people that is high art and very elitist, and what is art? You are excluding the working people, who say 'grr, what's that got to do with me?', 'What's that got to do with my life and my working life day to day?', 'I don't give a tuppence-ha'peny about it' (Anonymous interview, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010)

### ***8.5 Place Brand Audiences: A More Complex Story***

However much the place brands may be represented as particular forms of culture – for particular individuals – we must acknowledge that culture, and indeed cultural fields are extremely complex. Indeed, the food, artists' and book town brands cannot be seen as representing the same type of culture – or as having the same form of legitimacy or exclusivity. Not all forms of culture are perceived in the same way. Thus, it makes me question how the brands can be perceived to be for the same 'types' of people – when each cultural field is diverse and different, as discussed in the previous chapter. The audience of a Book Town is not therefore necessarily the same as that to a Food Town, and the audience to some aspects

of a Book Town, is not necessarily the same audience to other aspects. Tastes will vary greatly within and between each field (e.g. food, art and books). With such complexity, it is not possible to think of 'art' or 'books' or 'food' as homogenous entities, for a single audience. As two interviewees note:

The people who would come to a book festival, are perhaps, not always the same people who would go to a music festival. The people who go to a music festival, are not necessarily the same people who would go to all music festivals (Anonymous interview, 28<sup>th</sup> October 2009)

Art is obviously very subjective. You either like things or you don't. There are people going into the exhibition now and absolutely loving it. There are some people saying 'I wouldn't give it house room'. It is like Tracey Emmen's unmade bed. I wouldn't have it given, but Charles Saatchi paid a fortune for it... Again, some people will like it and some people won't (Kirkcudbright Forum, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010)

Thus, one may enjoy and have a taste for a particular art form or genre, and then not others. With acknowledgement that the cultural fields of food, art and books are diverse, it makes us question whether the target audience of the place brands is in fact exclusively the 'type' of individual noted previously. Indeed, although the place brands may be portrayed as appealing to particular individuals (and assumed to be the target audience), within the places, there are different elements that potentially appeal to different people. Thus, there are events, exhibitions, attractions and businesses, which can be seen to appeal to different target audiences to that identified.

Whilst many saw that the target audience for the food, art and book themes as older, more affluent, middle-class people, we must critically acknowledge that with

class being such a contested term – and indeed the middle class not being a homogeneous entity (see Savage *et al.*, 1992) – this is problematic. As increasingly argued, taste-formation and cultural practices do not have to be exclusively linked with one's class or social position (see Bulmer, 1975a,b). Indeed, as found by Savage *et al.* (1992), the relationship between class position and leisure practices is complex, with different fractions of the middle classes having different taste formations, and that not all of these are distinctive from other fractions. Indeed, tastes and practices do not necessarily need to be based on issues of money and economic wealth – and who can afford it and who cannot. For example, in the Artists' Town, the summer exhibition and the Arts and Craft's trail are free. In the Book Town, whilst one can buy rather expensive rare and collectable books, one can also buy very cheap paperbacks. Despite the fact that one does not need to have a lot of money to go to these places, the target audiences were perceived to be affluent, and older – and ultimately, those interested in 'culture'. Such a discourse permeated the development of the place brands in ways that portrayed such assumptions as legitimate.

Through the ethnographic fieldwork, it became rather clear that in practice, the audiences of the place brands were much more diverse than initially portrayed, and that different aspects of the brand appealed to different audiences. Whilst many local people in Wigtown told me that they have nothing to do with the Book Town and are completely disengaged from it, because it is not their taste, they did in fact attend various talks or sessions at the Book Festival. For example, some of those interested in farming, attended a talk by Wilfred Emmanuel Jones, or farming journalist, Charlie Allan (Field Diary, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2009). Similarly, those individuals who I met at the local sporting fixtures, attended talks related to their

own interests – most notably the talk by Kenny Logan – a celebrity rugby star (Field Diary, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2009).

Indeed, where the audience at Book Festival events has been shown to be relatively mature in years – as is the perceived target audience to all of the three towns – this can be seen in reality to some extent, although not wholly. It is therefore dependent on the context and the situation, and cannot be easily reduced to issues of class or age (see Savage *et al.*, 1992). Whilst many of the audience at Book Festival events were indeed older individuals, at the Kenny Logan talk, the audience was much younger – and much more male-dominated than other talks. It is also worth noting how this talk (due to it being rescheduled) occurred in the school holidays, compared to the main Book Festival, which occurred during term-time. This again could potentially affect who the audience is going to be (Field Diary, 15<sup>th</sup> October 2009). In addition to the book talks, there are also other events at the festival, including a festival ceilidh, a talent competition, music events, film and theatre. The children's festival and events are also a case in point here:

I would say, in all that we do, we do try and reach out to everyone, in programming a varied programme – not just having events that are very literary, or really academic, but having things that are more fun as well, like Wigtown's got Talent, music events, theatre, film... not always ridiculously high-brow (Arts Administrator, Wigtown Book Festival, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2009)

Indeed, since its inception, children have been an important focus for the Book Town. There is also a dedicated bookshop that specialises in children's literature and a children's Book Festival, which runs alongside the main Book Festival. There are partnerships with the local primary school and the Creative Education



Department of the Local Authority – which hosts events at the Book Festival specifically for schools in Dumfries and Galloway. And, the Autumn 2009 edition of *Raring2go!*<sup>54</sup> had a double-page feature promoting the Children's Festival at the Wigtown Book Festival (p8-9).

There was also a perceived distinction between the audience of the Book Festival (which focuses on new and contemporary authors and publications) and those to the second-hand bookshops. The audiences were perceived as rather different, with different consumption practices (and dispositions), and with different taste-formations:

The festival this year [2009] was quite good, because there were quite a lot of book buyers this year. There aren't always at a festival, because festivals attract people who are interested in celebrity as well as people interested in books. So, they want to buy new books at the events and have them signed. But they are not necessarily book buyers (Bookseller, 13<sup>th</sup> November 2009)

Horror of horrors, I have never actually bought a book in Wigtown. It's a particular kind of book buyer that buys second hand books, because, by their nature, if they are textbooks, they are going to be somewhat out of date and if they are literary fiction for example, then I will probably order it through Waterstones, or pick it up at an airport, or in Glasgow (Author and Events Organiser, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2010)

One of the Wigtown booksellers was quoted in the Stranraer Free Press as saying "If you just get celebrities to come along [e.g. at the Book Festival], you get a lot of people who will come and will listen to the celebrity talk about their book, buy an

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<sup>54</sup> *Raring2go!* is a publication in Dumfries and Galloway which claims to be "the definitive guide of what to do and where to go for you and your children".

autographed copy of it and leave. They won't buy any other books because they are not book-buying people, they're really only interested in seeing that celebrity" (Wigtown bookseller quoted in Stranraer Free Press, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2007). Therefore, despite the audience of the Book Town brand being portrayed as rather coherent, the audience is actually much more fragmented. There are, in essence, multiple audiences of the place brands (with different taste formations and socio-economic characteristics), looking for different experiences.

Similarly to the Book Town brand, within the Artists' Town, the audience of the Arts and Crafts Trail, was perceived to be rather different to that of the Summer Exhibitions, and indeed, of the Spring Fling open studio event. This emphasises a fragmented understanding of the audience of the place brand, as different aspects appeal to different audiences, with different taste formations and practices:

I think there are far more locals who do the Arts and Crafts Trail [than Spring Fling] and a lot of the appeal of the arts and crafts trail – which is great – is that they get the chance to visit people's garden sheds and see gardens that they don't normally see... [However], about 60% of the visitors [to Spring Fling] are people who have come from outside the region, specifically for Spring Fling. And they come with the intention of spending money and they do spend money. A lot of serious collectors who will either go back to the same artist again and again and collect pieces, or they might go to their favourite artist and visit other one's as well... You do get serious, very well informed audience for Spring Fling, rather than the people who like to visit garden sheds and gardens (Artist, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

The above quote alludes to rather clear distinctions between the type of audiences at both events and an implication that the Spring Fling audience is much more

culturally aware and knowledgeable (and spends more money on art) than the audience for the Arts and Crafts Trail<sup>55</sup>:

I am a professional artist. I don't think it is in my interest to invite lots of people into my house, when I don't have much chance of selling any work. I don't feel I do for that sort of visitor...It is just a different art buying public. A lot of it is price. People like buying things for a few pounds or whatever... My work doesn't cost a few pounds, so it is not an impulse buy. It is not the right context for my work. (Artist, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

The above quote implies differences in taste formation and cultural practices between individuals. Whilst some individuals are interested in the artistic heritage of the place, others will be interested in the summer exhibitions, others will be interested in the commercial galleries (and possibly, a particular gallery), whilst others will be interested in the Arts and Crafts Trail. Indeed, the Arts and Crafts Trail aims for the family market, yet situates itself firmly within the Artists' Town. Of course, these activities are not exclusive. One may be interested in all of the different aspects of the Artists' Town – or indeed, one may be interested in a few of these areas, or none of them. One may be an avid art fan – with vast amounts of knowledge – or one may experience art (or certain genres of art) as part of a broad holiday experience. In relation to the development of a Kirkcudbright Art Gallery, TMS note “while building on the town's arts' reputation and history, and maintaining the integrity of the art theme in its own right, the project should appeal to the general public – including families – as well as dedicated art lovers” (TMS, 2002: 10). Indeed, all three of the towns also have other attractions, outwith the brands, which potentially appeal to a broad range of audiences. Kirkcudbright not only has the Artists' Town brand, but it also hosts the Kirkcudbright Summer

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<sup>55</sup> The audience of the trail is perceived to be rather diverse, but primarily focused on families

Festivities throughout the summer, for the last 40 years. Festivities include a medieval fayre, children's festival, a tractor rally and a tattoo and the target audience is very much the family market<sup>56</sup> – rather different to the perceived audience of the Artists' Town more broadly. Thus, representations and assumptions that places are constructed and marketed for particular audiences – is a point of contestation and conflict.

Despite such multiplicity in the potential audiences of place brands (and places more broadly), there is clearly a struggle that takes place with regard to how the brands should be represented and marketed (and ultimately the messages that they communicate to target audiences). As Baker (1998) – who is a book dealer and who was involved in the development of the Book Town – notes:

We thought the products were books to be marketed to readers and collectors, but no – according to them [public agencies] the bookshops were the products and they were to be marketed to tourists... The book trade is, by definition, a trade in books, and tourism is a different vocation. A budget for promoting booksellers should target adverts at book buyers and lay on the sort of junkets that are symbiotic with bookselling. Book buyers are not the same things as holidaymakers. We don't want folk bringing in toddlers with dripping lollies when it rains. Wigtown welcomes all visitors and has plenty of attractions, but Book Town Promotions has to refresh the parts of word addicts, hard-copy users and Bookspotting enthusiasts that other adverts don't reach (Baker, 1998: 19)

This expresses a clear vision of a particular target audience of the place brand, but it also raises the issue that this is not necessarily a shared vision. Indeed, the above quote also portrays a discourse of a particular 'type' of bookbuyer. There is thus a construction of a particular type of visitor as 'bookbuyer' – the 'desired'

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<sup>56</sup> According to the Summer Festivities chairman

target audience, with a particular level of education and with a particular demeanour (i.e. one who respects and cherishes books) – which is likely to be one of contestation and conflict. Whichever audience is seen as the dominant or legitimate audience of the brand will ultimately affect how the brand is promoted (and for whom) and interpreted.

What then becomes rather clear is that, whilst the activities, events and branding exercises are not *solely* for the target audience initially identified, there are various struggles over whom the legitimate target audience is. Despite this focus on the 'target' audience, it is clear that there is potentially a range of audiences for the brands. Whilst some things inevitably will not be to someone's taste, something else will be. By focusing on a wide and varied genre of these activities (food, art, books), place brand developments could potentially appeal to many different taste formations. In essence, they are adaptable, although not entirely inclusive. There are many events, festivals and activities that reinforce and support the place branding, that aim for rather different audiences to the one initially portrayed. However, simultaneously there appears to be a struggle within the process, to legitimise a particular audience, which has the potential to construct representations of the brand as being for particular audiences.

As discussed, despite the Artists' Town and the Book Town potentially catering for a variety of audiences, there was a significant discourse surrounding the brands that appeared to reinforce and legitimise a particular target audience (one related to the 'Affluent Active Devotee' visitor categorisation). Thus, it could be argued that this perceived target audience has become legitimate and dominant within the assumptions and marketing of those place brands, and as such, are promoted and represented in particular ways, to convey particular symbolic messages to such

audiences. Therefore, through the tourist categorisation (and assumptions and perceptions about tastes and one's social position), the place brands have been constructed in order to convey particular messages, and construct the places as places in which particular types of people may wish to visit. At the same time, other aspects of the place brands could be seen as competing for recognition, in order to promote the brands in alternative ways, to other audiences. This could be interpreted as a struggle for legitimacy (see Bourdieu, 1984).

However, it was a rather different experience within the Food Town. At Food Town Day, there was a mixed audience, although dominated by the family market. The different attractions of the day (such as a funfair) also support such observations. Whilst there was a local producers market (selling rather expensive produce), the atmosphere of the event did not really portray such an experience. The actual atmosphere in the town was more related to a community fete – rather than the gourmet food lover's haven<sup>57</sup>. Of course, despite such an observation, one must note that there are likely to be a wide range of individuals, seeking different experiences (see Hall and Mitchell, 2005). One may go to the Food Town day seeking quality, local food from the local producers market, or from the food outlets within the town, whilst someone else may go to the same event seeking to drink as much beer as possible. These are two rather different motivations, but occurring in the same place. Equally, the two are not exclusive – one may indeed go and find quality, local food and then drink as much beer as possible. Indeed there may be some, who are neither interested in local food, nor beer!

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<sup>57</sup> This is an interpretation based on personal experiences, and through conversations with numerous individuals.

Although the F.A.B campaign implies that the audience is the same across each of the place brands, it is clear that the Food Town does not really convey such messages, through the actual experiences on offer. This could be interpreted as a struggle for legitimate culture with regard to audiences. Whereas the representations of the Book Town and Artists' Town have become dominant somewhat with regard to being places for the 'Affluent Active Devotee' type categorisation, the Food Town does not convey the same messages. Thus, the marketing of the three places could be seen to be trying to construct particular experiences and messages associated with the places and the brands, yet they are becoming more dominant and legitimate within the Book Town and Artists' Town, than the Food Town. This could be linked to the stage of development of the brands. The Food Town is also seeking to be used as a tool to attract older audiences, with disposable income, as the Food Town coordinator commented:

There is this opportunity to pull in those empty-nesters... They are probably the ones we are most interested in, because they have got that little bit extra disposable income, that we look to them to utilise in this area (Food Town Coordinator, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010)

However, the extent to which this target audience is perceived as the legitimate target audience of the brand is questionable. Therefore, whilst these developments may be viewed by some as aimed at (or more attractive to) the older, middle classes, this vision is not shared by all. As the vice-chairman of the Food Town Initiative noted:

I don't think there is a specific target audience. It is anybody that is interested in visiting Castle Douglas and anyone who likes food. That includes a steak pie. That includes a pheasant casserole, or going up to lobster. It covers the range – everything... It is not the higher end, big

earners, who are being targeted. It is right across the board. It is food for everyone, from top to bottom (Vice-Chairman, Food Town Initiative, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2010)

Thus, there seems to be the struggle within the Food Town to make it more appealing to a particular 'type' of visitor, yet that vision has not (yet) gained legitimacy over others.

As highlighted, the place brands could therefore potentially appeal to a range of audiences and many different taste formations. As such, they are in essence, adaptable – to different audiences. Whilst they are adaptable, they are not necessarily inclusive, as particular messages are communicated through the brands, to particular individuals. Indeed, if the place marketing and branding is targeted towards particular audiences (as discussed), the symbolic messages that are portrayed through such marketing are unlikely to appeal to a wide range of audiences. The brands are then designed to construct and represent the places in particular ways, for such audiences.

## ***8.6 Chapter Summary***

It has been argued that place branding and marketing is targeted towards specific audiences and the marketing manipulates the images of place for this particular audience (see Gotham, 2002). This chapter argues that the place brands in this research are targeted towards 'Affluent Active Devotee' type individuals (a VisitScotland visitor typology). The target audience is perceived to be older, with disposable income (middle class?), with interests in good food, art and books. The brands are therefore marketed towards such individuals. Indeed, it was argued that due to such desires to attract particular audiences, the place brands were used to symbolically communicate particular lifestyle experiences and



connotations to such audiences. This can be seen through the F.A.B promotional campaign. With this desire for more 'upscale', discerning tourists with disposable income, the place brands become symbolic tools of communication (see Arvidsson, 2005), designed to represent particular meanings and experiences. Guided by constructed visitor typologies, and various hierarchical assumptions about the legitimacy of particular cultural practices and tastes, the place brands are therefore used to actually produce such consumers (and demand), through the symbolic portrayal of lifestyle experiences.

Through such a process, the place brands are perceived to appeal to individuals with particular dispositions and personal characteristics. The brands are thus imbued with a meaning that portrays elements of distinction and taste that would appeal to discerning visitors (see Bourdieu, 1984). Through this, the place brands are perceived to appeal to 'Affluent Active Devotees', which therefore brings such visitor typologies into existence (see Bourdieu, 1984). The associated branding and marketing thus continue to reinforce such messages and perceptions, which eventually acquire legitimacy and dominance within the mind of society and consumers.

However, the relationships between culture, taste and one's social position (including status, age, gender etc) are complex and problematic – particularly in light of the contested nature of culture and practice. Indeed, not everyone who visits the places will be the type of individual already noted – or indeed, will share similar taste formations. The chapter argues that there are other aspects of the brands that seek to appeal to different audiences (e.g. families) emphasising different audiences within the brands; and indeed, that the audience also differs between the brands. It is argued that the perceived target audience has become

fairly dominant (legitimate) within the perception of the Book Town and the Artists' Town (although as noted, the audience of such brands is actually rather diverse); however, there was significantly more disagreement about whom the audience of the Food Town is.

Although all of the brands were perceived to be targeting the same 'type' of audience, it is clear that on a more localised scale, the audience of the place brands is much more complex (within each brand; and between them). Thus, this finding questions the extent to which place branding / marketing can be targeted towards specific audiences (in recognition of such multiplicity of audiences). However, this research has also shown that the perceived audience appears to have become more legitimate and dominant in some brands (Artists' Town and Book Town) than others, implying a struggle for legitimacy, over exactly whom the targeted consumer is.

A range of activities and events exist within and alongside the place branding, which are directed towards and are appealing to different individuals. What may be perceived or interpreted to be for 'particular types of people' is not exclusively the case. There is actually a relatively wide audience for such place branding strategies – if promoted as such – and we must not therefore assume that one group is perceived to be more attractive than others. Place brands therefore must serve different aims, and target different individuals (audiences, consumers) simultaneously (Trueman *et al.*, 2004; Boyne and Hall, 2004).

## **Chapter Nine: Discussion and Conclusion**

Through empirical analysis, this thesis sought to explore the processes and complexities surrounding the development of place brands in rural Dumfries and Galloway. The theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu was drawn upon with this regard, particularly through his notions of the field and struggle for legitimacy. It also sought to critically examine the ways in which strategies of entrepreneurial governance are applied in rural contexts. As was identified in chapter five, the place brands discussed in this research were developed in different ways, but for the primary goal of attracting visitors and investment. This application of urban entrepreneurial governance is thus critically examined and questioned within the rural context in the current research. This chapter also problematised several of the key features of such a governance strategy, including the notion of partnership and inter-urban competition. In chapter six, the thesis examined how the places have been (re)constructed and transformed through branding. It noted the different ways in which the place has been transformed, and the various strategies for legitimising the brand development.

In chapter seven, the various struggles and contestations within the branding process were examined. There were struggles against establishing the place brands as the 'dominant' identity of place; but there were also struggles and contestations within the brands, regarding what they actually represent, and the meanings that they convey. Through engagement with the work of Bourdieu, this chapter questioned some of the often-referred-to principles of branding, such as the brands conveying a 'whole-place narrative' and a coherent and holistic identity (see Kavaratzis, 2005). Indeed, the brands were much more fragmented than such previous literature may imply. The final empirical chapter critically examined who the perceived audiences were for the place brands, as the previous literature

indicated that place marketing strategies are focused on a specific consumer (see Gotham, 2002). Despite a dominant discourse portraying such place marketing strategies to be for 'Affluent Active Devotee' type individuals (with particular dispositions, tastes and practices), the chapter identified that in practice, it is much more complex and problematic than this – with different elements of the brand appealing to different audiences, with different tastes and practices.

These key interpretations and discussions, as noted in the previous chapters, will be further explored in this final chapter. The following sections will address my four research questions, in light of the empirical data discussed in the previous chapters. My research questions were as follows:

1. How and why do rural place brands develop?
2. How are places reconstructed through branding?
3. What are the struggles and contestations in place brand development?
4. Who are the perceived audiences for place brand developments?

### ***9.1 Entrepreneurial Governance in Practice***

This section addresses the first research question about how and why places develop brands, which is addressed in chapter five. This addresses the governance of such developments and the reasons behind development. The development of place brands in Dumfries and Galloway can all be seen as strategies of attracting tourists and investment. As such, they have been designed with clearly entrepreneurial objectives in mind. As noted by Harvey (1989) and Hall and Hubbard (1998), many places (particularly urban ones) are increasingly adopting entrepreneurial strategies to the ways in which places are governed. Through such a situation, increasingly, places are in competition with other places for investment and tourists. With such an entrepreneurial agenda of governance,

place is increasingly packaged, marketed and sold to the outside world. The place brands examined in this research could be seen as entrepreneurial strategies of place governance, as each one was designed to attract visitors and external investment. The place brands can be seen as proactive, outwardly oriented strategies for place development, with clearly entrepreneurial motives, in order to secure competitive advantage for place. This is the same situation as identified by Hubbard and Hall (1998) regarding the entrepreneurial city. Therefore, rural areas too are developing such initiatives. Thus, chapter five critically examined the application of this (predominantly) urban theory into a rural context.

The chapter argued that the application of entrepreneurial strategies of place development is a diverse and rather contested process in practice, in rural contexts. The ways in which the place brands were developed differed between the cases. Clearly, in practice, the concept of entrepreneurial governance in rural areas is rather fractured and fragmented, as the application was contingent and varied between the cases. Whilst there are similarities in the application of place brands in a rural context, to that commonly discussed in urban contexts, there are also significant differences.

It is thus rather apparent, within chapter five, how several of the key notions of entrepreneurial governance are rather problematic in practice, including those of 'partnership' and 'competition'. Whilst places can be seen to be in competition with other places for investment and tourists, it is clear that in practice, in a rural context, it is not quite so clear-cut. Whilst the places in this research could be seen as in direct competition with each other, and other places in the region – which supports Hubbard and Hall's (1998) acknowledgement of inter-place competition within entrepreneurial strategies of place governance – it is also clear that there is

an element of cooperation. This can be seen through the Food, Art, Books promotional strategy, which shows partnership working between the three towns, in order to attract more visitors to the region. Whilst they are all competing, they are also in partnership together, and cooperating.

Not only did the partnership between the private and public sector differ between cases (in terms of contributions), it was also clear that motivated individuals and community groups play a significant role within the development of such branding strategies. This is much less common with reference to the application of entrepreneurial strategies of development in larger urban contexts, which tend to view partnership between predominantly private sector and public sector actors (see Harvey, 1989). Although the communities in this research are taking active roles in the development of place brands, there is also partnership between the public sector and the private sector (who invest in the idea). However, the scale of such investment is different to that in urban contexts, as is the scale of the private enterprises involved. Whereas much of the private sector investment in the urban entrepreneurial governance literature focuses on large businesses (see Hubbard and Hall, 1998), within the current case studies, the private investment tends to come from small-medium sized enterprises (such as a small bookshop). Whilst the private sector did not necessarily financially contribute to the development of the place brands (except for a contribution to a few marketing campaigns), some local business members were involved, in a voluntary capacity, with developing the brands. The role of the private sector therefore appears rather limited in the actual development of the place brands (except for opening businesses which support the brand). This notion of public-private partnership within the rural context is therefore rather different in practice to that experienced by larger cities. However, it is clear through partnership working, the place brands were enabled to be

developed. Without the financial contribution of the public sector, the commitment and enthusiasm of dedicated and motivated volunteers (community) and investment in the place by the private sector, the brands would not have been able to develop. This supports Hubbard and Hall who acknowledge that "the formation of coalitions or partnerships is thus seen as one of the principle means by which governors achieve... capacity to act" (1998: 9).

The place brand developments in this research therefore cannot be seen as the public sector adopting a more entrepreneurial approach to place governance (as Hubbard and Hall, 1998 suggest regarding cities). Indeed, it is the communities in these rural places that are adopting such strategies, with the support of the public sector and private sector. Whereas Hubbard and Hall (1998) and Ward (2003) identified an increasingly proactive role of the state in local economic development, indeed, in the rural cases explored in this research, it is primarily the communities themselves adopting a proactive role. Indeed, where Greenberg (2003) argues that the current mode of urban branding is centrally managed by city agencies, alongside professional marketing firms and integrated across public and private initiatives, this was different in the current research. Within these rural case studies, small community groups are responsible for the management of the brand (not the public sector, although they do contribute some funding). Whilst there is a single community group in each place responsible for the actual place brand (i.e. Wigtown Chamber of Commerce; Kirkcudbright Forum; Food Town Initiative), there are also many other organisations that contribute to the place brands in some way or other (e.g. Wigtown Festival Company organising the Book Festival; Kirkcudbright 2000 organising the Kirkcudbright exhibitions etc). This emphasises how the place branding in these rural places is not a centralised

process, but fragmented – rather different to that experienced in urban areas (as argued by Greenberg, 2003).

Despite the place brands being seen as entrepreneurial strategies of place development, it is clear that not only did the governance of such developments differ from that often reported in the urban literature, but also the actual type of development differs between these rural case studies and the policies adopted in larger cities. Where Hubbard and Hall (1998) identify a range of similar policies adopted between cities as a model of entrepreneurial governance (e.g. place promotion; physical redevelopment; flagship projects), in the small rural places in this research, the main emphasis was placed on promoting a particular image of place and staging festivals and events. Of course, the festivals and events are on a much smaller scale to those sought in large entrepreneurial cities (e.g. mega events like the Olympics; City of Culture Status; World Fairs), and are likely to have a more limited impact. There is much less emphasis on the physical redevelopment of place and the development of flagship projects, like there is in larger cities. Therefore, whilst some of the generic features of the entrepreneurial model of governance identified by Hubbard and Hall (1998) can also be seen in the present rural cases, it is all on a much smaller scale, with much more limited funds available for their implementation. Thus, it is clear that rural places are seeking to adopt entrepreneurial strategies of place governance – in order to reap associated benefits, and compete with other destinations – and whilst they can be seen to follow some of the generic features, as experienced by larger urban areas, the situation in practice, is rather different, much more limited and fragmented.

All in all, it can be seen that the place brands in Dumfries and Galloway emerged in slightly different ways – there was no single development trajectory – although



were all designed to attract external investment and tourists. Thus, they can be seen as having entrepreneurial agendas, yet were achieved (to varying extents) in different ways, and through different governance structures. It is also clear that whilst the developments all emerged through elements of partnership (third sector, private sector and public sector), the developments were predominantly driven by various community organisations, Community Councils, motivated individuals, and the private sector (note, small and medium sized businesses, as opposed to large businesses). It is also clear, through all of the developments, that notions of partnership can be viewed as problematic, as 'partnership' implies an act of union for the same goal, with the same vision – yet the developments in this research were contested, with multiple visions and struggles. Therefore, whilst they can all be viewed as entrepreneurial strategies of place governance, in practice, they are also rather different. There is therefore no single development trajectory towards the development of a place brand, as each case will have its own governance structures and faces its own challenges, struggles and contestations.

## ***9.2 Branding and the Reconstruction of Place***

Following on from recognising that the place brands were designed to stimulate economic investment and attract visitors, chapter six examined how places are reconstructed and transformed through and around the place brands. This addressed the second research question. The chapter argued that the place brands have reconstructed and transformed places in particular ways – both materially and symbolically. It supports research by Gibson (2002) in acknowledging that the use of culture can transform places, but chapter six shows that through place brands around culture, places are transformed in a variety of ways. There are material transformations within places, linked to the brands (e.g. more bookshops; more art galleries etc) (which supports Seaton, 1999), and also

temporary material transformations (e.g. festivals), which reinforce and legitimise the place brand in particular ways (which supports Waterman, 1998). In addition, there are social transformations linked to the branding (e.g. attracting new residents) and also symbolic transformations (as place is 'sold' to potential investors in particular ways etc). Therefore, the place brands have attracted additional investment to these places; and attracted visitors and new residents, which continues to reinforce the brand identity. Through examining the ways in which places have been transformed through branding, chapter six noted that the extent of such transformation varies between the cases. All places have attracted associated and theme-related investments, which supports Kavaratzis (2005), despite the governance of the place brands being more fragmented than that in urban areas. Therefore, even rural place brands could be seen as relatively effective strategies for implicitly managing places, as Kavaratzis (2005) argues is the case within branding. However, chapter six also acknowledged that the brands, and the materiality of the brand (e.g. associated shops etc) are constantly changing, and are not static (which supports Trueman *et al.*, 2004).

As it is argued that the brands must become dominant within place, and should be seen as the unique selling proposition (see Seaton, 1999), chapter six also noted several strategies for legitimising and reinforcing the place brands within the places. These not only included developing the actual materiality of the place (e.g. more bookshops etc); but through festivals; logos, flags and banners; educational initiatives (e.g. Passport Scheme); and the promotion of various discourses (e.g. that the brands are good for the towns). However, despite the places experiencing various transformations since branding, the extent to which the brands can be seen to be the unique selling proposition of place (or the dominant identity) is questionable, as the branding process is an extremely contentious one. Such

contestations and struggles within the branding process were critically examined in chapter seven.

### **9.3 Brands as Sites of Contestation**

Chapter seven addressed the third research question, exploring the struggles and contestations in place brand development. The chapter emphasised that the place brands are subject to various contestations. Broadly speaking, the chapter divides such contestations into a struggle over establishing the brand within place (as others seek other notions of place to be legitimate); and also struggles over the establishment of a particular meaning of the brand.

Firstly, the chapter argues that there are various struggles and contestations with regard to establishing the brand within place. The chapter acknowledges the co-existence of multiple place identities within each place. It is then argued that branding and marketing strategies – that seek to promote a holistic identity and whole-place narrative (see Kavaratzis, 2005) – encourage somewhat of a struggle over the preservation and transformation of place. This can be interpreted through Bourdieu's notions of the field and struggle for legitimacy. There are actors that seek to transform the place into an Artists' Town (or Book Town, or Food Town), and those which seek to promote (or conserve) over notions (such as the fishing heritage). There is, in essence, a struggle for legitimacy (within the field) over how that field (or place) is interpreted, and indeed, packaged, marketed and branded. However, the field, as a site of struggles, is subject to permanent contestation, as different aspects of the field are in competition with each other for legitimacy. Some aspects will become more dominant and legitimate over others (and will feature more strongly in the marketing strategies of place), which is then subject to further contestation, as other aspects seek dominance over that (see Bourdieu,

1993a). With such a continual process, it is therefore apparent why the place brands and their development are still contested issues, several years after their initial creation. This continual struggle for legitimacy and of 'position-taking' within the field is rather apparent (see Bourdieu, 1993a).

The place brands therefore do not necessarily become the dominant identity of place, for everyone, as Seaton (1999) argues. It is also questionable whether the place brand conveys a holistic, whole-place narrative, as Kavaratzis (2004) argued. Rather, it becomes one part of the place, which may acquire more legitimacy and dominance in some imaginaries, than others. In this sense the branding and marketing cannot be seen to over-simplify place, as Waitt (1999) argued, as the other aspects of place still exist outwith the brand, and indeed, are more dominant in some imaginaries than that of the branding.

However, chapter seven acknowledged that the struggles and contestations do not solely exist between the place brand and other place identities. There are also struggles and contestations within each place brand development, regarding the way it is represented, promoted and the experiences to be had. It became clear through chapter seven, how the development of a brand is a contested process, with various struggles over the actual meaning of the brand. Thus, the actual meanings of a Book Town, a Food Town and an Artists' Town were subject to a variety of different visions and associated struggles from a variety of actors – representative of the diversity within each cultural field (e.g. food, art and books). Such different visions make the notion of 'partnership' – one of the fundamental facets of an entrepreneurial approach to place governance – rather difficult. Such contestations also emphasise the inherent struggles and conflicts that are rife

within the development of brands as entrepreneurial strategies of place governance.

The place brand (and what it represents) becomes a site of contestation and struggle, and these contestations and struggles differ between places (and brands) and over time. Such struggles within the brand can also be interpreted through Bourdieu's (1984) notion of the field, whereby different aspects compete for recognition. This struggle can be seen as a form of position taking, whereby different aspects compete for recognition and legitimacy within the brand. It is this struggle to gain a better position (and more worth and recognition) within the branding that is taking place within the branding process<sup>58</sup>. However, whilst there is this element of struggle, whereby different elements seek more recognition, it is also clear that each element appears the 'legitimate culture' to those engaged in promoting that specific aspect. These different aspects also seemingly co-exist simultaneously within the brand, thus questioning whether there is indeed a single legitimate culture, as Bourdieu (1984) argued.

As place branding is used to promote a clear and coherent message (see Kavaratzis, 2005), and it is argued that brands create a shared experience and common identity (Arvidsson, 2005), it is rather apparent that in the development of rural place brands, the process of establishing such clear messages and constructing a shared experience and common identity is an extremely contentious one. The brand can be interpreted through Bourdieu's notion of the field, which is fraught with a variety of struggles and contestations for legitimacy. It is clear that within the place brands, there are different aspects that offer different

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<sup>58</sup> Or in the case of the Food Town brand, the struggle over encouraging other features (e.g. fine-dining to seek legitimacy within the brand)

experiences – thus making the place brand rather fragmented and incoherent (which challenges Kavaratzis, 2005). This could be due to the non-centralised nature of the brand governance, as discussed in chapter five, and the emphasis on investment from small-medium sized enterprises and voluntary community groups. Whilst all of the different elements seem to co-exist within the brands, the actors involved also seek to make their own aspect the legitimate aspect of the brand. Within the rural place brands in this research, with such struggles and contestations taking place, particular aspects may, over time, acquire more dominance and legitimacy in the brand, although it is likely that the branding process will continue to be fraught with struggles and contestations, as other actors seek to transform the field (the brand) in alternative ways.

With such a situation, it is questionable how a rural place brand can communicate such coherent messages, as Kavaratzis (2005) argues. Such an understanding almost assumes that there is a 'legitimate culture' of the brand that is promoted. However, as has been demonstrated, there are multiple aspects of culture all seeking recognition and legitimacy within the place brand. Thus, it is argued that there are multiple legitimate cultures, which are related to in different ways by different people (see Bourdieu, 1993a). It is therefore clear that there are multiple cultures that seem to co-exist simultaneously, within or associated to the place brand. Different aspects of the brand sit side-by-side with other aspects, and indeed, the place brands co-exist simultaneously with other aspects of place. Such findings also question the extent to which place brands create a whole-place narrative, which Kavaratzis (2005) argues is the case.

What chapter seven has done is identify the various struggles and contestations that exist within the development of the place brands within this research (between

the place brand and other place identities; and also within the place brand). In sum, there are a variety of different struggles and contestations over the legitimate culture and practices associated with the branding. There is a constant flux of contestation, with some elements gaining more dominance than others. It is clear that whilst there are similarities between the places – in the sense that they are all subject to various contestations and struggles of cultures – the situation in each town is also rather different, as each brand faces its own challenges and its own struggles and contestations for legitimacy, depending on its own stage of development. I would argue that the place brands therefore do not represent a single 'legitimate culture', but that the brands are fragmented and multiple – which challenges the place branding literature. With such multiplicity of the place brands, and different aspects promoting different experiences, it is also clear that the rural place brands do not necessarily convey shared experiences and a common identity, as Arvidsson (2005) argues in relation to branding. This thus questions the applicability of branding theory of products to places – as places are fundamentally more complex and contested.

In sum, what the place brands actually represent is contested. There are various struggles that take place over the brands, by different interest groups, seeking to portray the brands (and places more broadly) in particular ways. This can be interpreted through Bourdieu's notions of the field and the struggle for legitimacy. Thus, the place brand can be seen as a field (site of contestation), in which a struggle for legitimacy takes place. Different interest groups seek to make particular notions the legitimate culture of the brand (and place), although these aspects all seemingly co-exist simultaneously. With this constant struggle over what the brands (and places) represent – and the meanings that are conveyed – it is questionable the extent to which place brands can be seen to portray a clear,

coherent and holistic identity for place, which was argued by Kavaratzis (2005), Freire (2005) and Rainisto (2003). Through the current ethnographic inquiry, the place brands are far from clear, coherent and holistic. Whilst they may be represented as such (or strived to be) through various promotional materials, in practice, the materiality acknowledges that there are different fractions, promoting different facets, lifestyles and experiences, and that the brands are therefore sites of contestation. Such experiences are likely to appeal to different audiences, with different taste formations. This was the focus for chapter eight.

#### ***9.4 The Audience of Place Brands***

The final empirical chapter explored who the perceived audiences were for the place brands. It has been argued that place branding and marketing is targeted towards specific audiences and the marketing manipulates the images of place, for this particular audience (see Gotham, 2002). Chapter eight argues that the place brands in this research are targeted towards 'Affluent Active Devotee' type individuals (a VisitScotland visitor typology). The target audience is perceived to be older, with disposable income (middle class?), with interests in good food, art and books. The brands are therefore marketed towards such individuals. Indeed, it was argued, that due to such desires to attract particular audiences, the place brands were used to symbolically communicate particular lifestyle experiences and connotations to such audiences. This can be seen through the F.A.B promotional campaign. With this desire for more 'upscale', discerning tourists with disposable income, the place brands could be interpreted as becoming symbolic tools of communication (see Arvidsson, 2005), designed to represent particular meanings and experiences. Guided by constructed visitor typologies, and various hierarchical assumptions about the legitimacy of particular cultural practices and



tastes, the place brands are therefore arguably used to actually produce such consumers (and demand), through the symbolic portrayal of lifestyle experiences.

Through such a process, the place brands are perceived to appeal to individuals with particular dispositions and personal characteristics. The brands are thus imbued with a meaning that portrays elements of distinction and taste that would appeal to discerning visitors (see Bourdieu, 1984). Through this, the place brands are perceived to appeal to 'Affluent Active Devotees', which arguably therefore brings such visitor typologies into existence (see Bourdieu, 1984). The associated branding and marketing thus continue to reinforce such messages and perceptions, which eventually acquire legitimacy and dominance within the mind of society and consumers.

However, the relationships between culture, taste and one's social position (including status, age, gender etc) are complex and problematic – particularly in light of the contested nature of culture and practice. Indeed, not everyone who visits the places will be the type of individual already noted – or indeed, will share similar taste formations. The chapter argues that there are other aspects of the brands that seek to appeal to different audiences (e.g. families) emphasising different audiences within the brands; and indeed, that the audience also differs between the brands. It is argued that the perceived target audience has become fairly dominant (legitimate) within the perception of the Book Town and the Artists' Town (although as noted, the audience of such brands is actually rather diverse); however, there was significantly more disagreement about whom the audience of the Food Town is.

Although all of the brands were perceived to be targeting the same 'type' of audience, it is clear that on a more localised scale, the audience of the place brands is much more complex (within each brand; and between them). It became apparent that the place brands could not be seen as attracting one particular type of audience, as there are potentially different audiences for different aspects of the place branding (and associated events etc). Thus, chapter eight addressed the complexity of such place brands – acknowledging different 'types' of activities and events that come under the branding; the different practices; the different audiences and some of the implicit and subtle struggles that occur through the branding of place around cultural themes. This emphasised the diversity and the nuanced nature of cultural fields and place branding. Indeed, the place brands could not be seen to be exclusively for the 'Affluent Active Devotee' type individual identified by VisitScotland (acknowledging of course that such marketing categorisation may not represent reality anyway). A range of activities and events exist within the place brands, which are directed towards and are appealing to different individuals. It is not just older, 'middle class' individuals that populate such brands. As a case in point, the children's Book Festival in Wigtown; the Arts and Crafts Trail in Kirkcudbright; and the Food Town Day in Castle Douglas are all potentially appealing to a family market. There is, as such, a rather mixed audience for different aspects of the place brand – with a mixture of individuals with a range of different motivations and taste formations. Thus, this finding questions the extent to which place branding / marketing can be targeted towards specific audiences (in recognition of such multiplicity of audiences).

The situation is therefore much more complex. What may be perceived or interpreted to be for 'particular types of people' is not exclusively the case. Therefore, food, art and books in their own right are too broad to appeal to a single

target audience, both within each place and between the places. For example, there can be no clear and single audience for a Book Town (as different aspects of the brand will appeal to different audiences / consumers), and as such, there can be no single audience that would be attracted to a collaborative marketing of food, art and books (as these are diverse fields). This therefore potentially makes the promotion and marketing of such place brands rather problematic and reductionist, with the possibility of also being rather exclusive. There is actually a relatively wide audience for such place branding strategies – if promoted as such – and we must not therefore assume that certain individuals are more likely to be the consumers (and audience) of such brands. What it does raise, however, is a fundamental issue regarding the association between taste and how places are represented, packaged and promoted based on various perceptions, discourses and assumptions of taste and practice. Individuals hold perceptions about whom the audience of such brands are (i.e. older, middle-class individuals), which appear to have become rather dominant representations within the Book Town and the Artists' Town. Whilst the Food Town may intend to target such individuals, currently that is not interpreted as a legitimate audience. This implies a struggle for legitimacy, over exactly whom the targeted consumer is within the place brands (and also between different aspects of the brand).

A range of activities and events exist within and alongside the place branding, which are directed towards and are appealing to different individuals. What may be perceived or interpreted to be for 'particular types of people' is not exclusively the case. There is actually a relatively wide audience for such place branding strategies – if promoted as such – and we must not therefore assume that one group is perceived to be more attractive than others. Place brands therefore must

serve different aims, and target different individuals (audiences, consumers) simultaneously (Trueman *et al.*, 2004; Boyne and Hall, 2004).

Despite recognition of the multiplicity of audiences, Gotham argues that place marketing involves focusing on the 'buyer' and "adapting, reshaping and manipulating... images of place to be desirable to the targeted consumer" (2002: 1743). Indeed, this can be seen as the case within the development of the place brands within this research through the 'Affluent Active Devotee' categorisation. However, it is not quite so clear-cut, as different aspects of the place brand potentially appeal to different audiences. Thus, there is no single target audience for such developments. Despite the existence of such multiplicity, it is clear that there is also an element of hierarchy, as particular audiences are deemed more worthy (valuable, legitimate) than others. There is, as such, a struggle for legitimacy over whom the brands are for (the messages they communicate and the way they are represented). In sum, this research suggests that place brands need not be targeted towards specific audiences, as it is clear that they can appeal to a broad range of audiences. The brands could therefore be designed to accommodate this complexity and multiplicity, which would also potentially reduce some of the contestations evident within the branding process, as each audience and different aspects of culture are given space and recognition.

### **9.5 Theoretical Work of Bourdieu**

Through this research, the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu has been useful in two main ways. First, his notion of the field has been a productive tool to allow me to explore the contestations that are evident within the place branding process. Interpreting the brand as Bourdieu's 'field', I was able to engage with the brand as a site of contestation, where different interest groups seek to promote their own

visions, practices and tastes within the brand identity. The branding process (and associated conflicts) could be interpreted as the 'position-taking' that Bourdieu argues takes place within the field, whereby social groups seek to better their own position. Whilst Bourdieu interprets such struggles as class based, the current research engaged with the field in terms of a struggle between individuals with different interests and values regarding what the places and the brands mean and represent. It was clear that through the branding process, there were various struggles for legitimacy. Bourdieu's notion of the struggle for legitimate culture was useful in exploring this. Whilst it was evident that there were various struggles for legitimacy, and different values ascribed to different practices, it was also clear however that there was also a multiplicity of culture. There was no single 'legitimate culture' in this sense, but a much more fragmented situation. Within the brands, there were rather diverse understandings of what the brand should mean or represent (and for whom), and whilst the different fractions sought to promote their own aspect over others (and make it the legitimate culture of the brand), it was clear that all co-existed simultaneously. Indeed, what some interpreted as the legitimate culture of the brand (or what it should mean or represent), was different to others. In this sense, individuals related to culture in different ways (regardless of perceived hierarchical position). This therefore implies a more fragmented notion of a legitimate culture, which supports Chaney (2002).

### ***9.6 Future Research***

With growing interest in place branding from practitioners and policy makers, and also academics, this thesis has only touched the surface on an increasingly popular phenomenon. However, this thesis has made a contribution to our understanding of place branding as an entrepreneurial strategy of place development in at least two main ways. First, this research has encouraged us to

acknowledge the rural, in addition to the much focused urban, and examine the ways in which these places are also seeking entrepreneurial means of governance – and importantly, the way that is played out in practice. Second, this research has encouraged us to explore place branding not solely as economic processes, but as contested and conflicting social and cultural ones too. Through the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu, this has been explored.

Of course, this thesis has several limitations. It has limited scope for generalisation, as it has been focused on three small places within a single region. It has also only provided a brief snapshot in time of developments that have been (and continue to be) in the process of developing. Future research could therefore build on this work as a foundation, to undertake more prolonged engagements with developments (over longer periods of time) and with a wider variety of cases. This would assist in being able to critically understand place branding more fully, and the issues that it evokes, and the similarities and differences between and within cases in different contexts. However, despite such limitations, this research has opened up an avenue for future inquiry, in a way that has not been done previously – by critically examining place branding as an entrepreneurial strategy of governance, through the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu, in a rural context.

With increasing interest in place branding, for future research, we must also not only consider the long-term effect of such place brands on the actual places (socially, culturally, economically), but also the effect on the 'other' places, which have not adopted a brand. Shields (1991) encourages us to think about these marginal places – that may have been left behind, or are the 'other' relation. Of course, place brand developments in their own right could be seen through this perspective as well, in terms of those driving the developments not wanting their

own place to be the 'other' relation or marginal, but to actively compete. Thus, we must recognise that places are relational entities – and are often perceived and understood, in relation to other places (see Shields, 1991). As seen in the case of Castle Douglas, place branding could potentially lead to a situation where other places seek some sort of brand in order to stay competitive. However, one must also consider the places that do not adopt brands. As was noted with regard to the Food, Art, Book campaign, by adopting such a branding exercise, neighbouring towns become the 'other' places – with no place in the campaign. As one local councillor noted "We did want to get Dalbeattie in on the act... by doing Food, Art and Books – you were excluding" (D&G Councillor, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010). Similarly to Dalbeattie, one must also consider the effect of the Book Town competition on the five other places that wanted the Book Town accolade (see Seaton, 1997c):

Moffat was up in arms when they lost out on it...Moffat was no more of a Book Town than Wigtown... all communities have so many different facets to them (Moffat resident, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009)

As noted with regard to all of the three place brands, the brand to add distinctiveness to place was seen as crucial to the economic health of the respective places. One must be critical though, that if all places choose a niche, and feel that they have to have a particular 'brand' in order to stay competitive, the landscape of place will be littered with various branded towns. With many places striving for the development of place brands and marketing strategies, the whole process potentially runs the risk of becoming meaningless, as similar 'distinctiveness' strategies are employed (see Yorkshire Forward, 2009: 52). This potentially runs the risk of losing any value from the whole exercise – as brands will become the norm. This then runs the risk of place branding becoming meaningless:

If [theme towns] is the route you go down, you have to avoid two risks. One, that you do it in so many towns and villages that it becomes meaningless, because you overpopulate the market. If every village you go to and every town you go to in D and G has got a particular theme, that kind of devalues the specialness and uniqueness of them. If you then replicate that in every authority in the UK it becomes a bit silly. The concept is absolutely fine, but lets not over fill the market. Finally, I would say be very careful that you do in fact not over-promise and under-deliver (Stewartry Area Manager, Dumfries and Galloway Council, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2010)

Therefore, in addition to exploring the effects of place branding on the places that are subject to such an exercise, future research could explore the effects on those 'other' places, which do not have a brand – and the effect on the places with brands, as other places adopt brands too. As an increasingly popular practice, place branding needs more critical academic research, which has the potential to influence policy.

### **9.7 Conclusion**

This thesis has developed our geographical understanding of place branding in a number of ways. First, it has called for us to critically examine and explore entrepreneurial strategies of place governance in practice, and to acknowledge the complexities and the variety of forms that such governance styles take. As much of the prior work in this area has tended to be dominated by an urban focus, the current research sought to further explore the phenomenon in a rural context – acknowledging that rural areas too are subject to such governance styles. Through a focus on entrepreneurial strategies of place development, this thesis specifically examined one form of strategy – place branding – and sought to explore some of the complexities and contestations associated with this form of place development. The shape of entrepreneurial governance, in practice, in rural areas, differs from



the urban model in a number of ways (i.e. less emphasis on a private/public partnership etc); and the actual lived reality of such a place governance style differs between places in rural areas (i.e. there is no standard format of development). However, the role of the community and motivated individuals in shaping the development of place brands is acknowledged across all three of the study sites. What is clear, however, is that the development of the place brands can all be seen as strategies of attracting tourism and investment.

Rather than viewing such strategies purely as tools for economic development, the current research set about to examine the social and cultural processes at play. As the place brands explored through the case studies presented in this research were focused on cultural practices (food, art, books), the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu provided a useful tool through which to explore some of the issues. It is important to note that this thesis was never intended to be a critical examination of the work of Bourdieu, rather, the work of Bourdieu was critically engaged with in order to better understand the complexities and contestations surrounding the development of place brands as entrepreneurial strategies of development. The work of Bourdieu was useful in allowing me to explore some of the issues surrounding the consumption of the place brands – specifically focusing on whom the consumers are (the audience) for such place brands. This was explored in chapter eight. From various discourses portraying the place brands as targeted towards a particular consumer (i.e. older, 'middle class', with disposable income), chapter eight problematised such rhetoric by arguing that, in practice, there is no *one* clear audience of the place brands. Whilst the brands may be interpreted as potentially appealing to individuals with particular (and similar) dispositions (and may be designed with such assumptions in mind), the audiences within each place brand differed, as did the audiences between brands. Thus, different aspects of

the brand, and different aspects of the place will appeal to different people (with different tastes and dispositions). The diverse nature of the activities and events (and of the audience themselves) should be considered as such, within the marketing of such places.

Bourdieu also allowed me to understand some of the struggles and contestations that existed within the place branding process – specifically, the struggles for legitimacy over exactly what the place brand is (or should be) all about. The meaning of the place brand is one subject to numerous contestations and struggles for legitimacy, as individuals seek to shape the place brands (and reproduce society) in particular ways. The way in which the brand develops will depend on the outcome of such struggles (i.e. whichever aspect gains more dominance); however, will be subject to continual struggle, as new components compete for recognition within the brand. Thus, there is a temporal nature to such struggles. Each place brand also faces different challenges and struggles, thus adding an element of spatiality. Whilst each place (and brand) can be seen to be the site of struggles and contestation, the shape of this in practice (and the extent to which certain elements become more dominant) differs between places.

Bourdieu's work also allowed me to explore a similar struggle, but that between the brands position within the place (in association with other aspects of place). As place is multiple, the branding of a place through a singular brand (i.e. Books) is subject to a variety of struggles, as other aspects of place (e.g. Wildfowling etc) also seek recognition within place. This is a similar process to the one described above. However, this research has also shown that the place brands have the power to reproduce and reconstruct places in particular ways (if they gain dominance and are legitimised), which has the power to attract individuals with

particular dispositions (this depends on the content of the place brand, and what activities are on offer). Place brands therefore do not automatically reconstruct place, but have the potential to construct place in particular ways. However, the extent of this will not be the same in all cases, and is likely to change over time, as other aspects compete for recognition. Chapter six explored many such strategies for legitimising the place brands – from adopting logos, banners, flags and educational initiatives (e.g. Passport Scheme), to festivals and events and the creation of the actual product (through attracting private investment in the form of bookshops and galleries etc).

Finally, it must be acknowledged that all three of the places in this research, whilst subject to similar social and cultural processes (and contestations), have all developed in slightly different ways, with different levels of perceived success. They all have different development trajectories, and different levels of buy-in and acceptance (from individual consumers, local residents, and even public sector agencies).

Through this research there are a few suggestions for how the development of place brands could be better navigated and managed, with the intention of reducing some of the associated contestations that are present within the process:

- First, involve a whole range of stakeholders (including the local communities themselves) and understand what it is that they want the place brands to do for them (and to mean).
- When devising the marketing for such brands, aim to encompass the range of different views (rather than focusing on a specific agenda of what the place brand should represent), with less specific focus on a specific target

audience, as brands have the potential to be appealing to a range of different audiences.

- Through the development of the place brand, try to encompass the complexity and heterogeneity of place (and of the brand itself). This will reduce some of the contestations within the process, and associated marginalisation and exclusion.

Rather than marketing and branding places in a holistic way, for specific audiences, the brands – alongside encompassing the diversity within the cultural field (e.g. food, art, books) – should also acknowledge the diversity of place more broadly. This may require that specific labels such as Book Town, Food Town and Artists' Town are modified to accommodate the complexity and multiplicity of place. By removing such specific brands, the whole variety of place could potentially be marketed, in a sophisticated way, to show all that the place has to offer. In this sense, the actual brand names need to be made more elaborate, rather than simplistic. This would potentially reduce some of the contestations and struggles surrounding place branding, as the diversity of the field (both the place and the brand) could be promoted – appealing to a broader audience with different taste formations. By aiming to give equal coverage and attention to all the diverse elements of the place, there would be less need for a struggle to establish a legitimate culture. This would also go some way in reducing the reproduction of the symbolic values of tastes and practices (which Chaney (1996) and Bourdieu (1984) argue permeate society). This would thus potentially lead to a situation where different tastes and practices were given more equal status (and legitimacy), thus reducing social difference through taste – rather than reinforcing such notions.

In sum, it became apparent through this research that place branding cannot be viewed as a simple and non-contested economic tool for place development. The developments of such brands are contested and are the site of numerous social and cultural struggles. There is also no single development trajectory of such place brands, as each of the places in this research have adopted brands in slightly different ways (for different reasons; from different starting points), with varying levels of success. Through a critical examination of the branding process, it is anticipated that this research be used as a foundation that highlights some of the issues associated with place branding. By making these issues known, policy makers and practitioners can be better informed about, and sensitive to, the challenges posed. There is, of course, no simple answer to solving the issues surrounding place branding. It is likely to remain a contested process. However, this research encourages us to think about place branding beyond an economic perspective – to consider the social and cultural processes at play also.

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## Appendix One: Events, Community Groups and Meeting Places Attended

Place	Community Groups, Places and Events Attended
Wigtown Book Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wigtown Baptist Church</li> <li>• Wigtown Parish Church</li> <li>• Wigtown Book Festival (25<sup>th</sup> September – 4<sup>th</sup> October 2009)</li> <li>• Folk music circuit performance</li> <li>• Wigtown and District Chamber of Commerce meetings</li> <li>• Wigtown community festival</li> <li>• Wigtown in Bloom meetings</li> <li>• Wigtown youth group</li> <li>• Wigtown library</li> <li>• Scrabble club</li> <li>• Charity pub quizzes</li> <li>• Talks and Walks (local lecture series)</li> <li>• Football club on match days</li> <li>• Scottish country dancing</li> <li>• Tamborelli club</li> <li>• Samba club</li> <li>• Astronomy group</li> <li>• Leader archives</li> <li>• Machars Movies and Isles Future</li> <li>• Netball club</li> <li>• Passport session at Book Festival</li> <li>• CREATE session at Book Festival</li> <li>• Wigtown market</li> <li>• Wigtown Community Council meetings</li> <li>• Personal dinners, parties and trips with local residents</li> <li>• African drumming group</li> <li>• Swallow Theatre performances</li> <li>• Lunches for the elderly (October club)</li> <li>• University of the Third Age talks</li> <li>• Wigtown women's trail meetings</li> <li>• Breast Cancer charity walk</li> <li>• Alpha course meeting</li> </ul>
Castle Douglas Food Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Castle Douglas Food Town meetings</li> <li>• Castle Douglas Food Town AGM</li> <li>• Castle Douglas Food Town Day</li> <li>• Castle Douglas library</li> <li>• Episcopal church</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charity run event</li> <li>• Local producers market</li> <li>• Leader archives</li> <li>• Stewartry Area Committee meeting</li> <li>• Castle Douglas art gallery exhibitions</li> <li>• Open day at Broughton House, Kirkcudbright</li> <li>• Wigtown Spring Book Festival</li> <li>• Castle Douglas Fair Trade Town meetings</li> <li>• Lochside theatre performances</li> <li>• Brewery tour</li> <li>• Galloway preservation society</li> <li>• Personal dinners, parties and trips with local residents</li> </ul>
Kirkcudbright Artists' Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibition openings in private galleries</li> <li>• Kirkcudbright Forum meetings</li> <li>• Kirkcudbright 2000 meetings</li> <li>• Kirkcudbright Chamber of Commerce Meetings</li> <li>• Kirkcudbright Community Council Meetings</li> <li>• Stewartry Area Committee Meetings</li> <li>• Arts and Crafts Trail</li> <li>• Summer exhibition ('Glasgow Girls')</li> <li>• Galloway children's festival</li> <li>• Medieval fayre</li> <li>• Car boot sales</li> <li>• Historical walks</li> <li>• Kirkcudbright Parish Church</li> <li>• Kirkcudbright library</li> <li>• Leader archives</li> <li>• Personal dinners, parties and trips with local residents</li> <li>• Stewartry Museum</li> <li>• Tolbooth Art Centre</li> <li>• Kirkcudbright Jazz Festival</li> <li>• Scottish nights</li> <li>• Glasgow Boys exhibition, Glasgow</li> <li>• Wickerman festival opening night</li> <li>• Pub quiz with local residents</li> <li>• Riding of the marches event</li> </ul>



## Appendix Two: Ethnographic Questions

1. How do people feel about the theme town developments?
  - a. Are they opposed or in favour? Why?
  - b. How did this brand come about?
  - c. Who is it for?
2. How do they envisage place?
  - a. What does place mean to them?
  - b. The importance of the place brand to place, and it's inhabitants?
  - c. Has the place / region changed much over the past few decades? If so, how? (i.e. What did place use to be like?)
  - d. How do they see place now?
  - e. How do they see place in 10 / 20 years? And how would they like to see place in 10 / 20 years?
  - f. Why live in / visit Wigtown, Kirkcudbright, Castle Douglas?
3. What do they do for leisure activities?
4. Do they have any particular cultural tastes?
  - a. Are some tastes seen as 'better'?
5. What is one's occupation?
6. How often do you visit the bookshops, art galleries, museums, butchers etc?
  - a. In Castle Douglas, where do you do your weekly shopping? Who is the 'Food Town' brand for?
7. Do you attend the events / festivals within place?
8. In relation to visitors, where have you come from and what were your reasons for visiting this place / region?

### **Appendix Three: List of Interviewees**

1. Professor Tony Seaton, University of Bedfordshire
2. Roy Surplice, Former Wigtown Book Town Chairman
3. Robin Richmond, Ming Books, Wigtown
4. Bjorn Dirks, Former Wigtown Book Town Development Officer
5. Vanessa Morris, CREATE
6. Rosemary Baker, A.P and R Baker, Wigtown
7. Ian Barr, Festivals Officer, Dumfries and Galloway Council and former Book Town Development Officer
8. Jenny Bradley, former Book Town Development Assistant
9. Ian Cochrane, The Old Bank Bookshop, Wigtown
10. Ros McNay, Leader
11. Catherine Campbell, Wigtown Book Festival Company
12. Moi McCarty, M.E. McCarty Bookseller, Wigtown
13. Piotr Lewicki, Economic Development Officer, Dumfries and Galloway Council
14. Anne Barclay, Wigtown Book Festival Company
15. Sandra McDowall, Councillor, Dumfries and Galloway Council
16. John Robertson, Former Book Town Development Officer
17. Beverley Chadband, G.C. Books, Wigtown
18. Angela Everitt, ReadingLasses, Wigtown
19. Stewart Anderson, Wigtown Primary School
20. Rebecca Coggins, Cultural Services, Dumfries and Galloway Council
21. Michael McCreath, Former Book Festival Chairman
22. Adrian Turpin, Festival Director, Wigtown Book Festival Company
23. Stephen Groome, Food Town and Glorious Galloway Co-Ordinator
24. Keith Irving, Food Town Chairman
25. Helen Fenby, Cream 'O' Galloway
26. Derek Crichton, Stewartry Area, Dumfries and Galloway Council
27. Louise Vickers, Scottish Enterprise Dumfries and Galloway
28. Colin Bell, Scottish Enterprise Dumfries and Galloway
29. Karen Wilson, VisitScotland
30. Helen Friedrichsen, Economic Development Officer, Dumfries and Galloway Council
31. Elisabeth Manson, Castle Douglas Fair Trade Initiative

32. Darren Burns, Europe Officer, Dumfries and Galloway Council
33. Brian Haining, Treasurer, Food Town Initiative
34. Kate Anderson, Artist, Tongland nr Kirkcudbright
35. Liz Chambers, Destination Dumfries and Galloway
36. Rosie Clark, Manager, Whitehouse Art Gallery, Kirkcudbright
37. Jim Bell, Kirkcudbright Summer Festivities
38. Leon McCaig, Kirkcudbright Jazz Festival
39. Andrew Campbell, Kirkcudbright Forum, Kirkcudbright 2000, Kirkcudbright Chamber of Commerce
40. Dr David Devereux, Museums Curator, Dumfries and Galloway Council
41. Robert Higgins, Councillor, Dumfries and Galloway Council
42. Stephen Kirkpatrick, Weesleekit Design
43. Jane Maitland, Councillor, Dumfries and Galloway Council
44. Lesley Garbutt, Kirkcudbright Community Council, Kirkcudbright Forum, Kirkcudbright 2000
45. John Halliday, Artist, Kirkcudbright
46. Julian Watson, Artist and Venue Manager
47. Colin Saul, Kirkcudbright Arts and Crafts Trail
48. Pauline Saul, Kirkcudbright Arts and Crafts Trail
49. Vivien Dania, Kirkcudbright Arts and Crafts Trail
50. Peter Duncan, Councillor, Dumfries and Galloway Council
51. Linda Mallett, Artist, Kirkcudbright
52. Andrew Macdonald, Showcase Gallery, Kirkcudbright
53. John Hudson, Kirkcudbright Abroad, Poet and Events Organiser
54. Lee Seton, Dumfries and Galloway Council
- 55 – 67. Participants who requested anonymity

## **Appendix Four: Interview Schedule**

- **Introduction to project**
- **Interviewee's organisation / department**
  - *What is the role / function of your organisation / department?*
  - *What are the organisation's current aims / plans / priorities?*
- **Interviewee's role / background**
  - *What does your role involve in this organisation?*
  - *How long have you been in position?*
- **Organisation's / individual's role in development (1 / all 3)**
  - *How did the developments come about?*
  - *Who was involved?*
  - *How are the developments governed / managed?*
  - *What is/was your/your organisations involvement with the development of the theme towns?*
  - *What are/were the objectives / motivations for involvement of yourself/your organisation?*
  - *How do the developments fit within regional / national strategies and priorities?*
  - *To what extent does policy legitimate certain developments*
- **Role and Function of Theme Town**
  - *What were the reasons for development?*
  - *What were the aims of development?*
  - *What type of image are you trying to portray of the place and the region more broadly, through these brands?*
  - *What type of message are you trying to send through such an exercise in place branding?*
  - *What 'type' of food does the Food Town promote? Why?*
  - *Who are the theme towns and it's activities aimed at?*

- *How do you attract and engage that audience?*
- *How do you engage local audiences and encourage local participation and support?*
- **Politics of developments**
  - *As the theme towns may appeal to a niche market, or to particular tastes and interests, to what extent was there opposition towards development?*
  - *How were any conflicts of interests addressed?*
  - *How do you encourage local 'buy-in' to concept?*
  - *How do you involve local people / local children?*
  - *Why that particular form of development, as opposed to other possibilities?*
  - *To what extent was the public consulted on development and what say did they have in the role and shape of development?*
  - *How are decisions made?*
  - *The politics of large supermarkets (e.g. Tesco) and place?*
  - *Connections with other places? National / International?*
  - *Role / purpose of Food, Art, Books (F.A.B) project?*
    - *Who was involved? How funded?*
  - *Why change the F.A.B project to Festivals, Activities, Beauty?*

### **Culture and Development**

- *Would you see 'food' as part of 'culture'?*
- *What role do you see for 'culture' within rural areas and within rural development?*
- *What 'type' of culture do you mean?*
- *What 'type' of activities/attractions would you like to see more of?*
- *Why those?*
- *How do the theme town developments fit into the plan to make Dumfries and Galloway the rural capital of culture for Scotland?*

- *To what extent could the development of culture-related theme towns, be seen as an ambition to make people more 'cultured'?*
- *What role do you see for these places in terms of education and spaces for the acquisitions of skills and knowledge?*
- *What role do you see for these places in terms of being a space to perform certain cultural practices and tastes?*
- *To what extent could the theme towns be seen as offering 'high' or 'elite' culture?*
- *To what extent could these places be seen as spaces of 'quality', offering quality experiences and quality products?*

### ***The Future***

- *What further development would you like to see happen (in the towns or the region more generally)?*
- *What are the future plans for the theme towns / region?*
- *Is the proliferation of interest in places becoming theme towns perceived as a threat?*

## Appendix Five: Sample Daily Itinerary

Time	Itinerary
7:30am – 10am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transcription</li> </ul>
10am – 5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews (maximum of 2 per day)</li> <li>• Archival / documentary research around scheduled interview appointments</li> <li>• Visit at least 1 business (at least 2 in Castle Douglas)</li> </ul>
5pm – 6pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dinner</li> </ul>
6pm – 10pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community meetings (e.g. Community Council; Chamber of Commerce; Initiative Meeting). OR</li> <li>• Community groups (e.g. Samba)</li> <li>• Private functions<sup>59</sup> (e.g. dinners; drinks; parties)</li> </ul>
10pm – 11pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type up research diary</li> <li>• If completed research diary before 11pm, I would transcribe any interviews outstanding</li> </ul>
11pm – 7am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sleep</li> </ul>

<sup>59</sup> As many individuals realised that I was alone in the places, I was often welcomed into community groups, and invited to personal / private functions.

**Appendix Six: Sample Weekly Itinerary<sup>60</sup>**

Day	Itinerary	
	Day (10am – 5pm)	Evening (6pm – 10pm)
Monday to Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interviews (maximum of 2 per day)</li><li>• Archival / documentary research around scheduled interview appointments</li><li>• Visit at least 1 business (at least 2 in Castle Douglas)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community meetings (e.g. Community Council; Chamber of Commerce; Initiative Meeting). OR</li><li>• Community groups (e.g. Samba)</li><li>• Private functions (e.g. dinners; drinks; parties)</li></ul>
Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Markets</li><li>• Festivals / Events</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Personal functions</li><li>• Festivals / Events</li></ul>
Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Church</li><li>• Transcriptions</li><li>• Rest and reflection</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rest and reflection</li></ul>

<sup>60</sup> It is important to acknowledge that the itinerary for each week differed, as I attended different activities and events; and the itinerary between places differed, due to the presence of different organisations, activities and events. This just shows a sample from 1 week.



## Appendix Seven: Participant Information Sheet



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### Participant Information Sheet

**Title:** Food, Art, Books: The Cultural Politics of Rural Place Development

**Researcher:** Andrew Fordham (contact details above)

**Introduction:** You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is important to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

**Project:** This research is being undertaken as part of my PhD in Human Geography at The Open University. It looks at the cultural politics of rural regeneration, through the development of 'theme' towns, with a specific focus on three places in Dumfries and Galloway – Castle Douglas (Food Town), Kirkcudbright (Art Town) and Wigtown (Book Town).

**Why me?** You have been approached to take part, because I would like to understand your involvement or your feelings towards the development of one (or more) of the 'theme' towns.

**Do I have to take part?** The research is completely voluntary and you are not obliged to take part. You are free to refuse participation in the research and you may also withdraw from the research at any time, if you so choose<sup>1</sup>. If you decide to participate, you will be given this sheet to keep and you will also be asked to sign a consent form.

**What will happen?** If you agree to participate, I would like to speak to you and ask you some questions. With your permission, I would like to audio record our conversation, so as I can transcribe what we discuss. I will keep the conversation as short as possible as I appreciate your time is very valuable.

**How will I benefit?** Whilst there are no immediate benefits for taking part in the project, it is hoped that this research will contribute to our understanding of rural regeneration and governance, with potential implications for policy and practice.

The Open University is incorporated by Royal Charter (RC 000391), an exempt charity in England & Wales and a charity registered in Scotland (SC 038302)

What if I want to complain? Hopefully, there will be no need for complaint. If you do have an issue or a problem, you may contact me (on the details at the top of the page). This research is being supervised by two academics in the Geography department at The Open University, Professor Kevin Hetherington ([k.i.hetherington@open.ac.uk](mailto:k.i.hetherington@open.ac.uk)) and Dr George Revill ([g.revill@open.ac.uk](mailto:g.revill@open.ac.uk)).

Who is funding the research? The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is funding this research.

Who has reviewed the research? In addition to my supervisors, the Human Participants and Materials Ethics Committee (HPMEC) at The Open University have reviewed the ethics of this research.

Any further questions? If you have any questions, please feel to ask me now, or contact me at a later stage (on the contact details above).

Thank you for reading this and I hope that you will take part in this piece of research. Your time and contribution is very much appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,



Andrew Fordham

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<sup>1</sup> If you decide to withdraw participation from this research project and would like the data which you have provided to be destroyed, requests may be made until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010, after which time, destruction of data will not be possible.

## Appendix Eight: Consent Form



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### Consent Form – Named Consent

**Title:** Food, Art, Books: The Cultural Politics of Rural Place Development

**Researcher:** Andrew Fordham (contact details above)

1. I have read and understood the participant information sheet for the above study and had the opportunity to ask questions (*please tick box*) ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason and can request the destruction of data until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010 (*please tick box*) ☐
3. I agree to take part in the above study (*please tick box*) ☐
4. I agree to the interview / consultation being audio recorded (*please tick box*) ☐
5. I agree to the use of quotes in publications (*please tick box*) ☐
6. I give approval for my name and/or the name of my workplace/organisation to be used in the final report of the project, and future publications (*please tick box*) N.B. waiving anonymity is not a condition of participation ☐

**Name of participant:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of researcher:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix Nine: Contribution by Different Actors

Place	Actor / Agency	Contribution
Wigtown Book Town	<p>University of Strathclyde with Scottish Enterprise</p> <p>Wigtown Book Town Working Group (voluntary group comprised of a book dealer; business association members; town provost; local development officer; Community Councillors; local councillor) formed as sub-committee of Machars Action (a Local Development Organisation)</p> <p>Wigtown Book Town Company was formed from the working group after Wigtown became Scotland's Book Town. This was a company limited by guarantee (1997-2007) and employed a development manager and assistant.</p> <p>Wigtown and District Chamber of Commerce (2007 - ). Association of local businesses in the Wigtown and District area</p>	<p>Undertook research on Book Towns and formed the Scottish Book Town competition.</p> <p>Submitted application to Book Town competition</p> <p>Launched the Book Town. Attracted investment. Promoted and marketed Wigtown Book Town. Organised the annual Wigtown Book Festival.</p> <p>Promotion and marketing of the Book Town</p>

	Wigtown Festival Company (2007 - ). A charity employing a festival director and festival manager	Organising the annual Wigtown Book Festival.
	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Objective 5b Funding 1994-1999	£112,000 from Objective 2 Funding (SOSEP, 2002: 3; SOSEP, 2001: 2)
	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Objective 2 Funding	£180,000 for the County Buildings restoration (SOSEP, 2003: 4)
	Dumfries and Galloway Council (DGC)	The Book Festival received £38,000 from the 'Beacon Events' Fund in 2007 (DGC, 2007)
	Scottish Enterprise Dumfries and Galloway	Contributed £12,000 towards the International Organisation of Book Towns festival in 2004, as match-funding (Leader, 2004)
	Leader Funding	Contributed £24,000 towards the International

		<p>Organisation of Book Towns festival in 2004 (Leader, 2004)</p> <p>Contributed nearly £17,000 towards the poetry competition (2005)</p>
Kirkcudbright Artists' Town	<p>Kirkcudbright 2000 is a local voluntary organisation</p> <p>Kirkcudbright Forum is a local voluntary organisation</p> <p>Dumfries and Galloway Council (DGC)</p> <p>Leader Funding</p>	<p>Established to promote the development of a major art gallery in Kirkcudbright. They host the annual summer art exhibition</p> <p>Developed the Artists' Town branding in 2000, as a strategy to contribute to the cultural, economic and social development of Kirkcudbright.</p> <p>In partnership with Kirkcudbright 2000, DGC contribute £25,000 p/a towards the summer exhibitions.</p> <p>Kirkcudbright Summer Exhibition received £17,000 from the 'Beacon Events' Fund in 2007 (DGC, 2007)</p> <p>£15,000 to Kirkcudbright Forum (2004/2005) (DGC, 2005a)</p> <p>£23,000 towards an exhibition and international project with Pont Aven (2003-2005)</p>

		£9,000 towards an exhibition in 2006
		£8,000 towards an exhibition in 2007
Castle Douglas Food Town	Castle Douglas Community Council	Initiated the Food Town brand, in conjunction with the local councillor, in 2002
	Castle Douglas Food Town Initiative. Comprised of local business members. Employs a part-time co-ordinator	The Food Town initiative took over the remit of the Food Town soon after the creation.
	Leader Funding	£10,000 towards increasing stakeholder involvement in the Food Town and promotions in 2007
	Scottish Enterprise Dumfries and Galloway	£5,000 towards increasing stakeholder involvement in the Food Town and promotions in 2007 (match-funding)
	Dumfries and Galloway Council	£10,000 towards increasing stakeholder involvement in the Food Town and promotions in 2007 (match-funding)
		£10,000 in 2005 from Planning and Environment Committee
		£6,000 in 2005 from Education and Community Services
		£6,000 in 2004 from Education and Community Services (DGC, 2005:1)

## Appendix Ten: Development Trajectories

Place	Key Dates	Development Trajectory
Wigtown Book Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1996</li> <li>• 1997</li> <li>• 1998</li> <li>• 2007</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research by University of Strathclyde (led by Prof. Seaton) with Scottish Enterprise discussed the potential for Scotland to have a Book Town</li> <li>• Machars Action (a community development organisation) saw Book Town article in the Herald newspaper</li> <li>• Wigtown Community Council made contact with report's author regarding becoming the Scottish Book Town</li> <li>• Book Town Working Group was established (including representatives from the Community Council, the local business association, and the local councillor) to work on the Book Town bid</li> <li>• Book Town competition was established (comprised of representatives from the Scottish Tourist Board, Scottish Enterprise, three Book Town founders, and Prof. Seaton)</li> <li>• Wigtown was selected. Bookshops were encouraged to open in Wigtown. Wigtown Book Town Company formed (employing 2 members of staff). This company was responsible for managing all aspects of the Book Town (i.e. promotion, marketing, organising festivals).</li> <li>• Official launch of Book Town.</li> <li>• Wigtown Book Town Company dissolved. Creation of the Wigtown and District Chamber of Commerce (responsible for marketing the Book Town); and the Wigtown Festival Company (responsible for the Book Festival).</li> </ul>



Kirkcudbright Artists' Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2000</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kirkcudbright 2000 (a community organisation) was established to promote the artistic heritage of Kirkcudbright and seek the creation of a gallery of national significance for the town. The group staged the 'Homecoming' exhibition, in recognition of the work of former Kirkcudbright artists. Kirkcudbright 2000 have staged a summer exhibition every year since 2000 (except 2001), and currently receives £25,000 p/a from Dumfries and Galloway Council for this purpose.</li> <li>• Kirkcudbright Forum (a community organisation) was created to improve the economic, social and cultural well being of Kirkcudbright. This organisation devised the Artists' Town branding. This organisation also promote Kirkcudbright more broadly and produce a 'what's on' guide for tourists.</li> </ul>
Castle Douglas Food Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2001</li> <li>• 2002</li> <li>• c.2004</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In recognition of the other place brands, a local councillor and the community council raised the notion of adopting a place brand for Castle Douglas. A sub-committee of the community council was established and the brand adopted (as the perceived strength of the town's businesses).</li> <li>• Castle Douglas Food Town was launched.</li> <li>• A Food Town Committee was established, formed by members of the local business community, to drive the initiative forward. A part-time co-ordinator was employed to promote the Food Town.</li> </ul>